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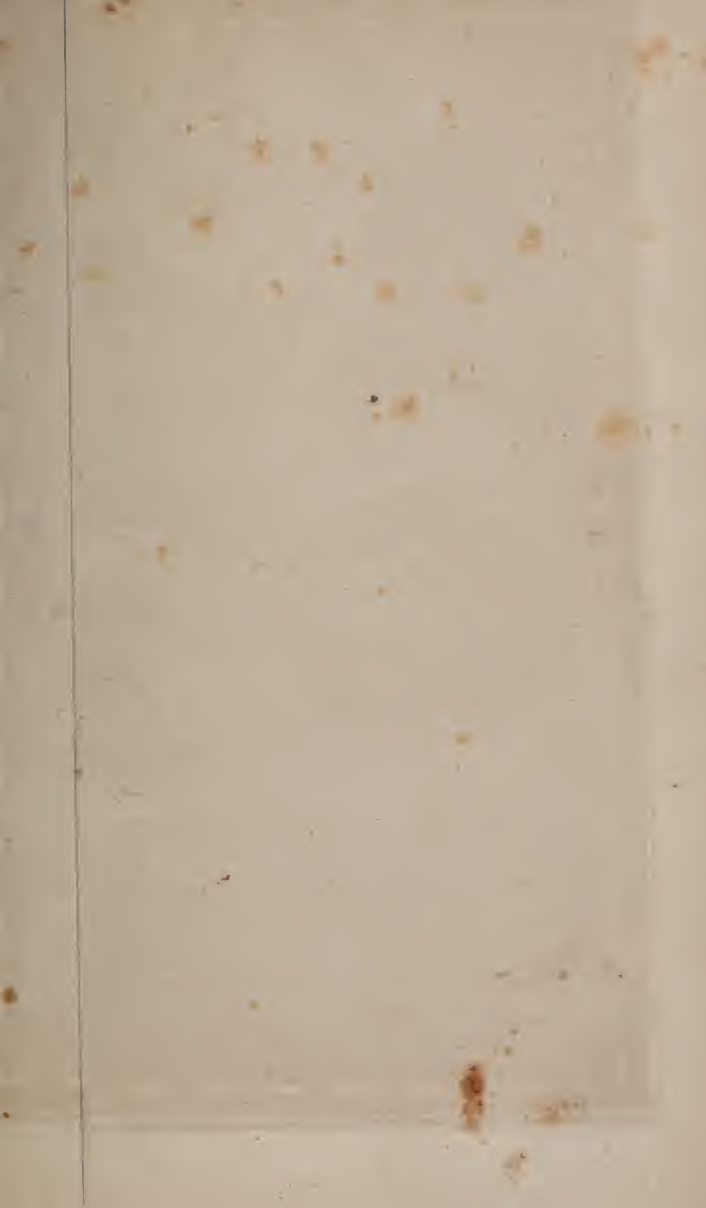
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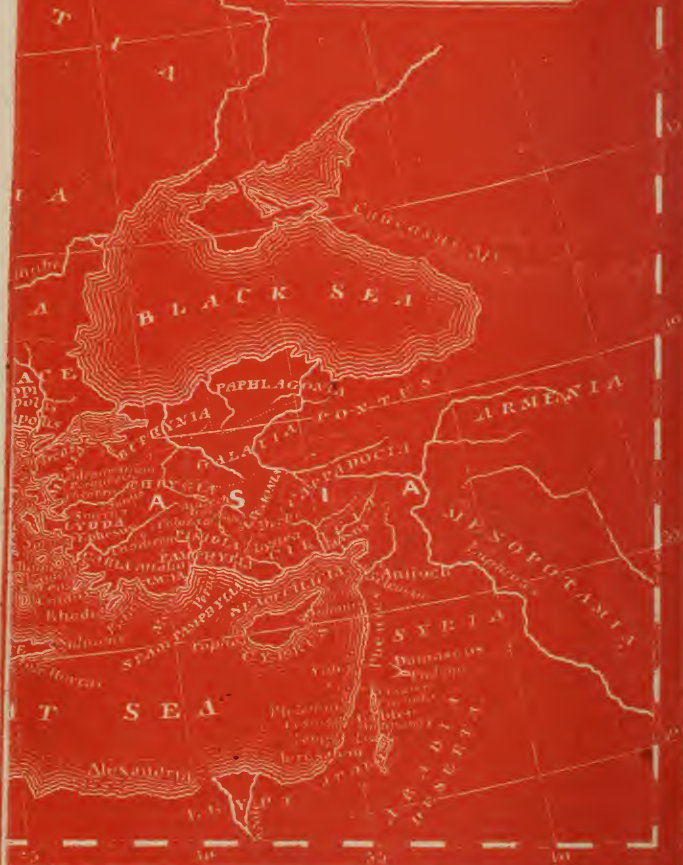






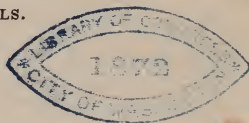


MAP
OF THE COUNTRIES TRAVERSED
AND PLACES VISITED BY THE
APOSTLE PAUL



THE
LIFE AND TRAVELS
OF THE
APOSTLE PAUL.

PREPARED WITH QUESTIONS FOR THE USE OF SUNDAY
SCHOOLS.



(WITH A MAP.)

BOSTON:
LILLY, WAIT, COLMAN, AND HOLDEN.
1833.

MAP
OF THE COUNTRIES TRAVELED
AND PLACES VISITED BY THE
APOSTLE PAUL



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INTRODUCTION.

THE reader will not, I am persuaded, at this distant period, expect to find much novelty in any thing that can be said on the life or travels of the Apostle Paul. The sacred Scriptures testifying of him, and the works of contemporary authors, have been well ransacked by many an able writer, long before the present day.—While the materials, therefore, from which information may be gleaned are numerous, they are not *varied*. But as the subject is one which has hitherto been treated of principally in a theological point of view, I have been tempted to write the following pages, with the design of

combining with the events of the Apostle's life, a short description both of the past and present state of the various cities and countries visited by him in the course of his ministry, and of the customs and manners of the people amongst whom he was at different times thrown. The execution of this design will undoubtedly give rise to many digressions from the strict line of biographical writing, but I trust that the reader, in regarding these pages in a popular, rather than a theological, point of view, will pardon such digressions; and, for myself, I can only say, that if, in following out the plan thus laid down, the conduct or motives of the Apostle, or the slightest incident of his eventful life, should be illustrated in any one particular, my purpose will be served. Without farther preface or apology, therefore, I now commence my task.

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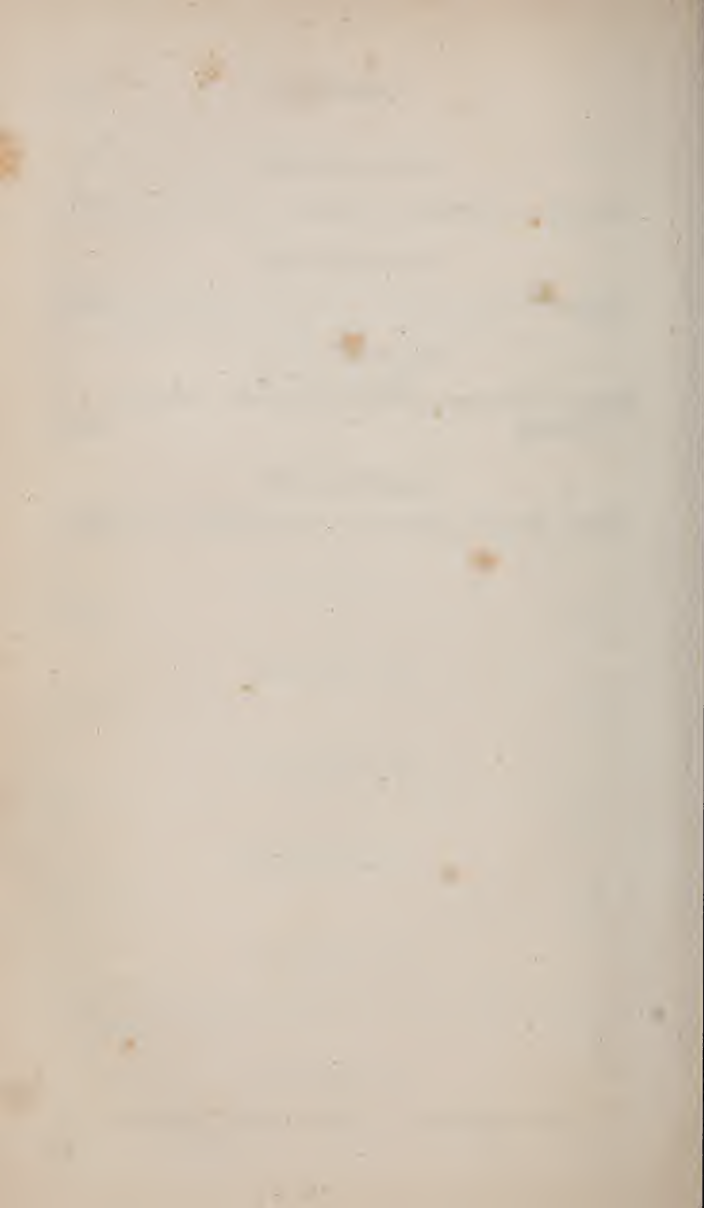
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CHAPTER I.

BIRTH — PARENTAGE — EDUCATION — MARTYR- DOM OF STEPHEN — CONVERSION.

THE birth place of the Apostle Paul, we are aware, has been disputed. Tarsus, in Cilicia, and Gischalis, a fortified town of some importance in Judæa, have both contended for the honor. But St Jerome, and others, who have supported the claims of the latter city, appear to have taken up and maintained their opinions, without sufficient grounds, and certainly with none which can stand in competition with the Apostle's own express declaration: 'I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia.' Elsewhere he tells us that he was 'a citizen of no mean city:' and truly Tarsus was in former times a place of some repute, fully deserving the commendation thus bestowed upon it. It was the capital of Cilicia, rich and populous, containing academies and schools, excelling even those of Alexandria and Athens,

in the various branches of literature and philosophy; its inhabitants possessed all the immunities and privileges of Roman citizens, which had been conferred upon them by Julius Cæsar and Augustus, in return for valuable services rendered. To it imperial Rome itself was indebted for some of the best and wisest of its professors, and in many respects, it held a proud place even among the first cities of that day. Now, it is a place of no importance; for during the wars of the Greek emperors with the Saracens and Persians, it was brought low. Christianity, first planted there by Paul, is not yet wholly extinct, but still continues to linger fondly amidst the ruined shrines that looked upon its birth. It is no stretch of fancy, therefore, to suppose that if its existence had not been joined with the name and memory of the celebrated Apostle, every trace of it would long since have vanished from the records of time.

The Apostle was born in the year of the world 3998, or about two years before the advent of our Lord. His parents were both Jews of the ancient stock, originally descended from the tribe of Benjamin. Such a descent was reputed highly honorable, and the Apostle seems to have attached considerable value to it.

According to the custom of the Jews, he was circumcised on the eighth day, and at the same time received his name of Saul; a name com-

mon in the tribe of Benjamin, since the days of Saul, king of Israel, who was chosen out of that tribe. At what time his other name of Paul was bestowed, or rather assumed by him, appears to be uncertain. Origen is of opinion that both names were given to him at the same time, — the one in reference to his Jewish birth, the other to his acquired rights as a Roman citizen. Others think that the name of Paul was assumed at his conversion ; while a third class are of opinion that it was bestowed upon him in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor. But the fact stands upon record, that he is not called by that name till the conversion of the Proconsul of Cyprus, *after* which he is not again recognized by any other name than Paul. I am therefore inclined to agree with those who conceive that he derived his name from Sergius Paulus.

Of the boyish days of the Apostle we know but little. He received the rudiments of his education at Tarsus. At an early age he was removed to Jerusalem, and placed under the celebrated Rabban Gamaliel, for the purpose of completing his education. This Gamaliel was the son of Simeon, supposed to be the same who, in the Temple, took our Saviour in his arms. He was a far-famed Doctor of the Law ; a person of great wisdom ; a man of authority and eminence. Under such a tutor, therefore,

if a corresponding degree of zeal burned within the pupil's breast, the Apostle must have made great progress in acquiring a complete knowledge of the laws and traditions of the Jews. We are explicitly informed, that he pursued his studies with success, nor will it be denied that the single fact of his invariably proving the doctrines of the Gospel by quoting from Moses and the Prophets, shows how admirably he had improved the advantages of his early education.

With regard to the manner in which the Doctors of the Law communicated their instructions, it must be observed, that there is a marked distinction betwixt the schools of the Jews, in which the children were merely taught to read the law, and those academies, such as Gamaliel's, where eminent men read *commentaries* on the law, and taught the traditions to the scholars. In these schools, the seat of the master was raised so high, that, when the pupils sat or stood, their heads were on a level with his feet. St Paul, therefore, does not mean to use a figure of rhetoric, denoting his humility, when he says, that he was 'brought up at *the feet* of Gamaliel.'

The liberal nature of the Apostle's education, and the expense necessarily bestowed upon it, are, I think, sufficient to testify that his parents must have been in opulent circumstances. It is true that, after his education was completed, he

was taught the trade of a tent-maker, which his father had exercised before him ; and this fact may seem to support the opinion of those, who have maintained that his parents could not have been in wealthy circumstances, or have moved in the better ranks. But it is to be recollected that it was deemed a necessary part of education among the Jews, that their children should be brought up to the exercise of some manual trade, by which, at any future period, they might be enabled to maintain themselves. Accordingly, the most rich and learned of them were so brought up. Indeed so absolute was this rule amongst them, that it was one of their great and leading maxims, that ‘ He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief.’ The trade of a tent-maker, too, in so warlike a country, was not only one of an honorable, but also of a highly lucrative description.

During the period of education, the Apostle’s life, in the estimation of the Jews, was blameless. He was strict and zealous in observing the laws of Moses. He was brought up in the principles and institutions of the sect of the Pharisees, or Separatists, with whom alone, from their known exclusive habits, it may reasonably be presumed, he associated. Now the members of this sect were proud, haughty, vindictive, and insolent. They scorned with bitter hatred, censured, and abused all who differed in

opinion from themselves ; they marked them as the worst of people, and styled them reprobates. They distinguished and separated themselves from their fellow-citizens by peculiar badges, and the ridiculous vanity of their dress. They neglected mercy, justice, charity, humanity, and all those attributes which we have been accustomed to look upon as inseparably connected with a good and virtuous life. In their place they substituted a strict outward observance of the ceremonial law. They washed, fasted, prayed, and gave alms in public ; they uplifted their hands and voices to God, at the corners of the streets, while their hearts were far from him. They were, as an old writer quaintly observes, ‘especially active and diligent in the outward instances of religion, which cost them nothing, and in seeking to make others twofold more the children of the devil than they were themselves.’ Their sole object was to raise false temples to their own glory ; to varnish over and conceal their character and crimes by an outward show of that religion which they did not inwardly possess, and to do all that could hold them up to the eyes of a deluded people as more righteous than their neighbors.

With their political principles we have not much to do ; but they were a numerous and powerful sect, and frequently became formidable to the kings of their own nation, and, as Josephus

tells us, they were so perverse even to princes themselves, 'that they would not fear many times openly to affront and oppose them.'

Such was the character of the people with whom the Apostle spent many of the earliest years of his life; and, when we consider how wondrously he escaped the contamination of all their grosser vices, we may surely hope that even then the seeds of better things were sown within his breast. We cannot, however, deny that he was deeply imbued with the active and fiery genius of his sect, nor can we exculpate his memory from the charge of a most relentless persecution of the followers of a meek and lowly Jesus. With an intolerant pride, he detested every party or religion opposite to his own. He looked with bitter scorn upon the disseminators of novel doctrines; and, as he himself informs us, 'he made havoc of the church, and haling men and women committed them to prison.' He was not contented with persecuting those who openly professed the doctrines of the church, but, with a proud and ungovernable zeal, he entered into the houses of suspected persons, and, disregarding the distinctions of sex and age, dragged them from their homes to prison, to punishment, and death.

This, we know, was his general conduct, but we are not acquainted with any particular detail of his acts at this time. His presence at,

and the part he took in, the death of the martyr Stephen, on which occasion he is first introduced to us in scripture, is, I believe, the only specific instance of his persecution which has been handed down to posterity.

The extent to which Paul was implicated in this transaction, has been much disputed. It does not appear that he took any active hand in the execution of the cruel sentence pronounced upon the glorious martyr; but his presence and conduct at that event show that he both consented to, and applauded, the transaction. He was not a mere chance spectator there. He came of set purpose. He tells us in his own words, that he 'kept the raiment of them that slew him,' or, as we read in another passage, 'the witnesses laid down their clothes at his feet,'—that is, the executioners confided their garments to his care, because, according to the Jewish custom, those who had accused any one of uttering blasphemous words, or borne witness against him, were *compelled* to cast the first stone.

The storm of persecution having thus commenced, it arose, ere long, to the height of an ungovernable tempest, which soon dispersed the unhappy Christians of Jerusalem. Like the demon of the storm, the Apostle seemed to ride upon the blast. He continued his persecution with wilder zeal than ever. He sought out

the saints — he dragged them from their places of concealment — he beat them in the synagogues; he compelled them to blaspheme, he imprisoned them, he caused them to be put to death; and so energetic was his wild course, so marked his persecution and fiery zeal, even beyond that of his fellows, that his name spread far and wide as a destroyer of the church, and became a watchword of terror to the saints. It was in the midst of this course that his heart was touched, and he became another man.

Worn out with the persecution he had committed at Jerusalem, yet in his insatiable fury, anxious to extirpate the innovating race, he made application to the Sanhedrim, or chief council of the Jewish nation; and from it he received full warrant and commission to go down and ransack the synagogues at Damascus, and bring all offenders bound to Jerusalem, that they might be arraigned and sentenced there.

Armed with this authority, the Apostle, ‘breathing out threatenings and slaughter,’ proceeded on his way to Damascus; thus, to gratify the ruling passion of his mind, undertaking a troublesome and dangerous expedition of no less than one hundred and sixty miles. It was determined, however, that ere he reached the city his mind and spirit should undergo a mighty change. He drew nigh to it, probably at the very moment exulting in the prospect of the ter-

mination of his journey, and the speedy opportunity which would be afforded him of carrying his views into execution, when suddenly a bright, a glorious light like a sun burst from the heavens ; a voice was heard ; and Paul and his companions, wonder-stricken and amazed, fell with their faces to the earth.

While thus *prostrate* in the dust, the voice addressed him by name, saying, ‘ Why persecutest thou me ? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.’ The Apostle, summoning up courage, in the midst of his trembling, asked, ‘ Who art thou, *Lord* ?’ From this expression we may presume that the knowledge that the voice was that of Jesus had burst upon his mind. He was not, however, left in doubt, for immediately the voice answered, ‘ I am Jesus whom thou persecutest ;’ whereupon the Apostle made this memorable inquiry, ‘ Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?’ showing that humility and self-abasement already occupied the throne on which pride so recently had sat.

The voice then desired him to rise and go into Damascus, for he had been constituted the minister and witness of Jesus, to preach to the Gentiles, unto whom he was then sent.

In obedience to the commands thus laid upon him, the Apostle arose, but deep blindness had fallen upon him ; and his companions were compelled to take the now humbled persecutor by

the hand, and lead him like a little child. *They* were not struck with the same blindness which had afflicted him; and to account for this, the older writers have indulged in a variety of speculations. Some will have it that his blindness was produced by gazing on the effulgent brightness of the Redeemer's presence, while standing face to face in conversation with him. I cannot find any authority to support this statement, nor do I think it necessary to search out a natural cause, in order to account for an effect which confessedly arose out of a transaction altogether *supernatural*.

I do not, however, mean to say that upon this occasion the Apostle did not behold our Redeemer's person. For Paul himself declares in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, in speaking of those who had beheld our Saviour *after* his resurrection: — 'And, last of all, he was seen *of me* also, as of one born out of due time.' Now I am not aware of any other period at which this could possibly have happened. But, to remove all doubts upon the subject, St Luke, in his narrative of this event, states that our Saviour, in the course of his revelation, used the following express words, — '*I have appeared unto thee.*' Likewise, he puts these words in the mouth of Ananias, when restoring Saul to sight — 'The Lord, even Jesus, that *appeared unto thee in the way* as thou camest

hath sent me ;' and, in St Paul's own narrative of the event, repeated by St Luke in the twenty-second chapter, he states that Ananias, on restoring his sight, immediately added — ' The God of our fathers has chosen thee that thou shouldst know his will, and *see* that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth.' ' For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what *thou hast seen and heard.*'

A great deal of useless discussion has arisen to ascertain whether Paul's companions heard the voice that spoke to him or not. There are many speculative opinions indulged upon this point. Some will have it that the voice was positively heard and understood by them ; — others, that it was heard, but not understood, because Paul's companions knew not the Hebrew tongue in which it spake ; — a third class maintain that a confused sound merely, but no articulate voice was heard ; — and a fourth, that Paul was heard speaking to the voice but not the voice to Paul. This last opinion, I think, is by far the most likely to be correct, and it is not inconsistent with the only passage which could throw a doubt upon the subject. St Luke in his narrative says, ' and the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, *hearing a voice*, but seeing no man.' Now the voice here heard may have been that of the Apostle himself, for there was no reason why *his* voice should not be heard,

and the amazement of those who were with him, arose at hearing the Apostle address himself to one as present, whom they did not behold. That this really was the fact, I cannot allow myself to doubt, when I turn to the report given by the Evangelist, of Paul's own account of the transaction, in which he affirms the Apostle to have said, 'they who were with me indeed, saw the light, and were afraid; *but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.*' It appears, therefore, to be clear, that in this transaction the Apostle actually beheld our Lord revealed, and heard his voice, while they who travelled with him heard no voice, and saw nothing but the wondrous light, or ineffable and effulgent brightness surrounding the Redeemer's person.

From cherishing the temper and disposition of a wolf, the Apostle now became meek and gentle as a lamb. The whole history of the world does not afford another example of so rapid and effectual a conversion. The ways of God are wonderful; and, as Lord Littleton justly observes, in that admirable treatise to which infidelity itself has never yet been able to fabricate an answer, this remarkable passage in the life of the Apostle is of itself sufficient to establish the truth of christianity.

QUESTIONS.

Where was St Paul born ?

Where was Tarsus ?

What is said of it ?

What is its present condition ?

What is said of the Apostle's parents ?

Why was his name changed from Saul to Paul ?

What is said of the Apostle's early education, and of the manner in which the Doctors communicated their instructions ?

Why was a person so well educated as the Apostle, bred up to a trade ?

In what religious principles was the Apostle instructed ?

What was the general character of this sect ?

What were the Apostle's feelings towards the Christians ?

What part did he take in the death of the martyr, Stephen ?

For what purpose did he go to Damascus ?

What occurred to him on his journey ?

Give the particulars in reference to his conversion.

CHAPTER II.

DAMASCUS—PERSONAL APPEARANCE—AND FAMILY STATUS OF THE APOSTLE.

WE have seen the persecutor leave Jerusalem armed with authority to destroy, and in the fulness of his pride, breathing vengeance against the church. Now we behold him approach the scene of his anticipated triumph, humbled in spirit — blind — and, with his dejected companions, shunning observation as they stole into the city.

Proceeding to the street called Straight, so named from its extreme length and narrowness, although from the peculiar style of the buildings, but a small portion of it can be seen at once, — the Apostle took up his habitation in the house of one Judas, concerning whom, nothing but his name is known.

With Judas he remained for the space of three days, during which period he neither eat nor drank, but passed the whole of his time in medi-

tation and prayer. The same deep blindness still hung like a cloud upon him, and the blessed light of day was entirely excluded from his sight.

It is supposed by some of the older writers, that during this season of darkness, he was 'caught up to the third heaven,' and there taught the truths of the Gospel by miraculous revelation. That he was so taught these truths is certain — for in his Epistle to the Galatians he expressly tells us that 'he received not the knowledge of the Gospel *of men*, nor was he *taught* but *by the revelation* of Jesus Christ.' But, for the hypothesis that he was caught up to the third heaven, *there* to have the Gospel revealed to him, there does not appear to be the slightest foundation. It is not said that during any part of these three days he was in a trance, or, *in mind*, absent from the earth. On the contrary, we know of only one instance in which he was so caught up to heaven, and the Apostle himself has fixed the date of his rapture at a period long posterior to his conversion. In the twelfth chapter of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, he tells us that '*about fourteen years ago*,' he knew a man, whether in the body or *out of the body*, he could not tell, caught up into the third heaven. Now, if we look backwards from the date at which this Epistle is known to have been written, we find that fourteen years brings us to the famine in the second

year of Claudius, when the Apostle went to carry the alms of the disciples to Jerusalem, at which period he had an ecstasy or rapture while praying in the Temple ; or, to use his own words, ‘ even while I prayed in the Temple, I was in a trance.’ It was certainly, therefore, at this period, and not at that of his conversion, that Paul was caught up into the third heaven.

During his three days of blindness, however, communications of the divine will were undoubtedly made to him, in visions, as they had been to the Prophets in days of old. He beheld a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hands on him, that he might again receive his sight. Ananias meanwhile, had also beheld a vision similar in its import. He was directed to arise and go to Paul, and restore him to sight. But the fame of the Apostle’s deeds at Jerusalem had gone before him, and it was known that he had come to Damascus to persecute and slay. Ananias, therefore, at first demurred at executing the commission in which he was thus miraculously instructed ; but his scruples were immediately overcome, for the Lord said unto him, ‘ Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings and children of Israel.’

Ananias accordingly arose, and proceeding on his way, entered the house of Judas, and laid his hands upon the Apostle, and said, ‘ The

Lord (even Jesus, that appeared unto thee on the way, as thou camest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight.' Immediately upon this annunciation, 'there fell from his eyes as it had been scales,' and at the same moment, as if the one act had been symbolical of the other, the darkness passed from his soul, and the glorious light of the gospel, in all its brilliancy, shone upon it.

Thus restored to sight, the Apostle rose, and the sacred rite of baptism being administered, he was admitted a member of the visible church on earth, and received the Holy Ghost.

Of him whom the Lord was pleased to employ as an instrument in this work of restoration, we have no authentic account. Save this one incident, no other circumstance in his life has been handed down to posterity. By some he is supposed to have been a layman, by others to have been a priest. One thing, however, is certain — that he was a good man — 'a devout man according to the law,' and was held in great esteem by the Jews of Damascus on account of the upright and honorable nature of his deportment.

Damascus, the place where so extraordinary a passage in the Apostle's life occurred, and where his public ministry may be said to have commenced, is a city of vast antiquity, having been in existence so far back as the days of the

Patriarch Abraham. It is beautifully situated in the rich valley lying between Libanus and Antilibanus, and in former days, was watered by the river Abana, supposed to be one of those with regard to which the Syrian Leper, in his hour of pride, asked the prophet Elisha if they were not better than all the waters of Israël, and if he might not wash in them and be clean.

For a long period, in its early days, it was a rich and splendid city, the capital of Syria of Damascus, or, as it is sometimes called, the kingdom of Damascus. About the year of the world 3160 it was taken by the Jews, under Jeroboam, and about one hundred years after that event it was almost entirely demolished by Tiglath-Peleser the Assyrian. Like a phœnix it arose from its ashes, and again became a flourishing place, till it was sacked and pillaged by Nebuchadnezzar. Borne down, but not destroyed by these repeated wars, it once more regained all its former lustre, and, when seized upon by the Romans, some hundred years afterwards, was a place of much consideration and wealth. It subsequently fell under the government of an Arabian prince, subject to the Roman power, and in the days of the Apostle this dynasty existed.

About six hundred years after the birth of Christ it was taken by the Persians from the Romans; but their reign was short, for it was

speedily re-taken, although only to be again conquered by the Saracens. During the middle ages it became a scene of desolation and bloodshed; at one time, in consequence of the petty warfare of the Seljukian Turks, and at another, from the far more extended, and certainly not less desolating, wars of the Crusades.

It has now stood a known and remarkable city for thousands of years. It is still one of the richest in the Levant, but the day of its glory has passed away, the splendor of its ruins now only tell of what it *has been*; the church so long maintained there has vanished, and, for many centuries, the pure spirit of Christianity has ceased within its walls.

In the Apostle's day, however, it retained much of its ancient splendor; and, in more direct reference to the subject of his conversion, there is still shown a place, about a quarter of a mile to the north of the city, where he is said to have beheld our Lord. At one period, a church had been erected on this spot, but scarcely a trace of it now remains.

It was in this great city that the ministry of the Apostle was destined to commence. In the midst of splendor and magnificence his Christian career began; but before accompanying him in that career, I must crave indulgence for a short period, till I attempt to give some idea of his personal appearance. He was of slender

make, and very short in stature. Chrysostom states that he was only *three cubits* high. A *Jewish* cubit was equivalent to very nearly twenty-two inches, English measure, by which means we find his height to have been about five feet five inches. His head was small; his nose long, but rather gracefully shaped; his eyebrows thick and low, yet not diminishing a certain sweetness of expression in his eyes. His complexion fair, the general cast of his countenance grave, but in his gait a most unseemly stoop. He was, moreover, of an infirm and delicate constitution; and, if not at the commencement of his ministry, at least at an after period, had a considerable hesitation in his speech, so that, as he himself candidly allowed, his 'bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible.'

I have been induced to draw this picture of the Apostle in order to impress the general outline of his appearance upon the reader's mind; for I am well aware that in perusing a detail of actions, evincing throughout a high degree of intellectual ability, great mental boldness, and an uncompromising firmness of character, we naturally associate a powerful and commanding personal appearance with these distinguished attributes. The same motive now urges me to make a few remarks upon the much disputed subject, whether Paul was a married man or not. This has been matter of fruitful controver-

sy amongst the older writers. The few remarks I have to offer on the point will, I trust, prove satisfactory ; and, if so, the end I have in view will be answered ; for we shall then accompany the Apostle in his ministry, regarding him, on the one hand, as having none of those dearer ties, which could have come betwixt him and his God, to sever ; and, on the other, as possessing none of those personal attractions, or remarkable powers of eloquence, which, by acting as a letter of recommendation in his behalf, might have tended to smooth the paths of that laborious pilgrimage he was destined to undergo.

In examining this question, I cannot deny that there are numerous authorities which support the theory of the Apostle having been a married man. Clemens Alexandrinus, St Chrysostom, and many other writers following them, are to be ranked among the number. But the principal authority is that of the apostolic father, Ignatius, who was very nearly a cotemporary of St Paul, flourishing in the immediate succeeding generation. He is said, in his epistle to the Philadelphians, to have classed Paul among the disciples who were married men ; and therefore, if it be once satisfactorily established that Ignatius actually so wrote the name of Paul, the authority would be very strong. But the authenticity of this part of his epistle has been very much doubted, and it has been argued that the

name of Paul was interpolated in the latter copies by those Greek priests who wished to have the sanction of the great Apostle's example.

That Ignatius himself was not a married man, is very obvious; for in that part of his epistle in which the disputed passage occurs, he is writing in praise of celibacy; but, at the same time, adds, 'not that I would vituperate other blessed men because they entered into matrimony, for I wish that I may be found worthy of God to sit at their feet in his kingdom, viz. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Isaiah, and other prophets; *Peter and Paul*, and other apostles.'

This is the principal authority upon which those who maintain that the Apostle was a married man depend; and truly the passage is so distinct and clear, that if it were proved to be altogether genuine, that its authority was too strong to be disputed.

On the one side, Alphonsus à Castro declares, that in the manuscript copies of the Epistle of St Ignatius, found in ancient libraries, the name of Paul does not occur; and, in particular, that in a copy preserved in the library of Magdalen College, Oxford, which is written in fair and ancient characters, the name of Paul is not to be found.

Such are a few of the leading authorities on this disputed point; we need not go farther than to the writings of the Apostle himself,

and our minds will be at rest. No one, I am sure, can read the seventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and come to the conclusion, that he who wrote that chapter was a married man. Take a few isolated passages from it : at the commencement, the Apostle approves, or rather, allows of marriage, in particular situations, but adds, ‘I speak this by permission, and not of commandment ; for I would that all men were *even as I myself* ;’ and, in the immediate succeeding verse, he adds, ‘I say therefore to the *unmarried* and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.’ Combine these passages with that which occurs in the thirty-second verse, and with the whole tenor of the Apostle’s life, and the conclusion is irresistible. He there says, ‘He that is *unmarried* careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord.’—Now the doctrines which the Apostle taught others, he ever strictly practised himself ; and, accordingly, we find his own life to be a most practical commentary upon this text. He cared not for worldly distinction nor for worldly wealth ; he was temperate and sober in all things ; by abstinence and mortification, ‘he kept under and subdued his body ;’ the smiles and frowns of the world were alike to him ; his conversation was in heaven ; his desires were there ; his wish was ‘to depart and be with Christ ;’ and,

as one who knew no dearer tie that could bind his affections to the earth, or clog their heavenward flight, he cared for those things only that belonged unto the Lord.

QUESTIONS.

Where was the Apostle, and how did he spend the first three days after his entrance into Damascus?

What objections are there to the supposition that St Paul was at this time 'caught up into the third heavens'?

Who was instrumental in restoring Paul's sight.

Where was Damascus situated?

What were some of the principal occurrences that took place in regard to this city?

What was the personal appearance of St Paul?

What led many of the old writers to consider St Paul a married man?

Is this authority sufficient to counteract the assertions of the Apostle himself?

What conclusion then follows in regard to this subject?

CHAPTER III.

ARABIA — DAMASCUS — PERSECUTION THERE —
JERUSALEM — CESAREA.

THE coincidences which occur in the history of kingdoms and of man are sometimes worthy of observation. From Damascus in former days sprung one of the most relentless persecutors* that Israel had ever groaned under, and now, in the latter times it was the scene of the conversion of one of the most bitter enemies the infant church of Christ had known. They were alike in the commencement of their lives, but their end was far different ; — the one continued in his wicked course till death put a stop to his career, the other became a great and good man, and finally laid down his life for the cause he had once despised.

From the hour of his wonderful conversion the Apostle became a zealous disciple of our Lord. He had put his hand to the plough, and,

* Hazael.

having done so, he thought no more of looking back. The labor of the ministry lay before him, and with singleness of heart and true earnestness of mind he pressed forward in his vocation. He openly preached Christ in the synagogue, teaching and instructing his brethren in the doctrines of the gospel ; and upon no occasion did he ever allow any worldly consideration to interfere with the discharge of his newly constituted duties. But, at this period, he underwent no trials at Damascus. His residence there was very short, and he soon retired into Arabia Deserta, where he preached the gospel to the wandering tribes who occupied the country of the Iturians, the Edomites, the Nabatheans, and others of which that district consisted.

We do not know what motives urged the Apostle thus to leave Damascus so immediately after the commencement of his ministry. It has been supposed by some that he retired into those thinly-inhabited and comparatively deserted parts of Arabia, in order, by a continuance of the divine revelation, to enjoy the opportunity of being fully instructed in the duties of his office, and the doctrines of the gospel, so that, in future days, he might be enabled to meet and overturn the subtile reasonings of his adversaries, the Jews.

But there is another reason which may be

assigned as influencing the Apostle's conduct upon this occasion. He probably deemed that a crowded city was not the place where one who must still have regarded himself as but a child in the mysteries of the gospel, could have preached with effect. It was moreover a guiding principle of his life not to build upon another man's foundation — not to labor in a vineyard which had been already fertilized — and we know, that Christianity had previously been established at Damascus. But in the desert plains of Arabia the glad tidings of the gospel had not yet been preached, and there a wide field lay open for the Apostle not only to lay a foundation, but upon it to build a bright structure of his own.

These, however, are but conjectures, and matter of conjecture his motives must remain; for St Luke did not accompany him in this journey, and he makes no mention whatever of it. But one thing is certain, that during his stay in Arabia, he employed himself diligently in studying the scriptures, and there acquired a complete knowledge of the doctrines, sayings, miracles, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour. This we learn from himself, and we cannot doubt that it was by immediate revelation his knowledge was acquired.

From the known character of the Arabs, who are ready to receive with open arms those who apply to them for refreshment and protection,

we may conclude that the Apostle had no difficulties arising from hatred or enmity to contend with. Here, then, amongst the descendants of the children of Ishmael, it may be conjectured, the first fruits of the Apostle's conversion were beheld.

In the midst of these wandering tribes he sojourned for upwards of two years ; after which, having been made perfect in the knowledge of the gospel, he returned to Damascus, and preached openly in the synagogues, setting at nought and confounding the wisdom of the Jews who dwelt there ; and, in the very teeth of all the talent and eloquence of their rabbins, proving that Christ was indeed the Son of God, and the Messiah foretold in the writings of the prophets.

Hitherto no persecution had attended the footsteps of the preacher ; but those trials and sufferings of which, in after life, he experienced so many, were now destined to commence. Filled with astonishment and hatred, the Jews lost no opportunity of persecuting the righteous man. They dared not, however, openly, and without the shadow of some substantial reason, spill his blood. With wonderful ingenuity, therefore, they devised a plan by which they thought to obtain his condemnation, under the law, and thus in the eyes of men, they would have remained guiltless of his blood, while the object they had in view would have been fully attained.

The war betwixt Aretas, king of Arabia, and Herod the tetrarch, on account of the latter having put away his wife, the daughter of Aretas, and taken Herodias, his brother Philip's wife in her stead, was on the point of breaking out. This event the Jews made subservient to their purposes against the Apostle. They gained access to, and poisoned the ear of the governor of Damascus, who held his situation and authority under Aretas, and persuaded him that Paul was a spy sent there to farther the ends of the Roman government. The governor at last being gained over, proceeded with a vigor that the occasion neither seemed to justify nor require. The gates of the city were closed, the guards were doubled, and every scheme that ingenuity could devise was put in execution, to ensure the Apostle's capture.

The friends of Paul, in the mean time, had not been idle. Suspicion had been awakened in their minds by the previous proceedings of the Jews, — they were on the alert, and the cause of these extraordinary preparations throughout the city speedily coming to their ears, they provided their new and well beloved teacher with the means of escape from the threatened danger. It has often been said that the incidents of reality bear the marks of fiction more strongly impressed upon them than those of mere romance. The truth of this observation is borne

out in the present instance. Cords and a basket were provided, and with much hazard both to himself and those aiding in his escape, the Apostle was, at midnight, lowered from the city wall. The precise place of his perilous descent is still pointed out. The modern traveller first visits the place of vision, and a walk of little more than half a mile, on his return to the city, leads him to the celebrated spot.

In thus fleeing from the persecution which had attacked him at Damascus, the Apostle showed no want of firmness or zeal towards the cause in which he was engaged. On the contrary, he merely put in execution one of the lessons inculcated by his Divine Master, who, in sending forth his Apostles, directed them, when they were persecuted in one city, to flee into another. The Apostle accordingly fled to Jerusalem, and after an absence of three years, arrived there, breathing the spirit of brotherly kindness and affection, instead of that of hatred and destruction with which he had been so fearfully imbued when he left its walls.

His principal object in returning to Jerusalem at this time, instead of proceeding to his own native place, was to become acquainted with the Christians who resided there. Accordingly, soon after his arrival, he sought out the still persecuted disciples of our Saviour, and essayed to join them; but they remembered the zeal

with which he had formerly persecuted and destroyed their brethren, and not having heard of his conversion, distrusted his present professions, and universally shunned and avoided him.

The end the Apostle had in view might thus have been altogether frustrated, had not ample provision for this emergency been made. Barnabas, his old acquaintance, and fellow-student under Gamaliel, had recently been at Antioch, and on his return from that city to Jerusalem, in passing through Damascus, had heard of the conversion of his friend. He arrived at Jerusalem about the same time as, or soon after the Apostle, and learning the situation in which he was placed, he took him by the hand, and brought him to Peter and James, to whom he related the wonderful history of his conversion, and also his zealous preaching at Damascus, and the consequent persecution he had undergone. Upon this testimony he was received by the disciples with open arms, and admitted into their society.

The Popish writers, who never lose an opportunity of bringing forward evidence to support their favorite doctrine of the Apostle Peter having been the head of the church upon earth, have an absurd tradition, that the object of St Paul's present journey to Jerusalem was to do homage to Peter's supremacy. Had Peter pos-

sessed this supremacy, St Paul would probably have been the first to do homage to him ; but so far from this being the case, we find Paul on a subsequent occasion rebuking Peter severely, which he scarcely would have dared to do, had the latter been entitled to rule, or vested with power over him.

Being received into fellowship with the disciples, Paul preached at Jerusalem as he had done at Damascus, speaking ‘boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus,’ controverting the arguments of those very Jews with whom he had formerly conspired to persecute the Church, and compass the death of the glorious martyr Stephen.

With characteristic fearlessness, he also disputed with the Grecians then at Jerusalem ; seeking their conversion, and devoting even more of his time to this object than to the instruction of the ancient Jews.

Having remained fifteen days at Jerusalem, the same unrelenting persecution, which had been stirred up against him at Damascus, began to show itself in the holy city. He was marked out as the prey of the unbelieving Jews. He was pointed at as one against whom the sword should be raised.

All this persecution, however, instead of injuring, only tended to promote the cause they detested. They were unconscious but efficient instruments in the hands of God, and although

ultimately the means of driving the Apostle from Jerusalem, they only sent him to preach the gospel in other lands, where the trumpet had not yet been sounded, nor the joyful tidings heard.

With that fearlessness, however, which formed so conspicuous an ingredient in his character, the Apostle, notwithstanding the persecution which raged against him, hesitated for a time to leave Jerusalem. But many of the disciples who had seen his utility, and praised God, that so efficient an instrument had been sent to do his work, trembled for his safety, and in the warmth of their affection besought and urged him to depart, and neither lessened their entreaties, nor ceased their more active exertions till they had brought him to Cesarea, a splendid port on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Previous to leaving Jerusalem, Paul had determined to proceed to *Tarsus*. At Cesarea, accordingly, he embarked at once on shipboard, and passing betwixt the coast of Syria and the Isle of Cyprus, crossed the sea of Cilicia, and with comparatively little trouble, reached his native place in safety.

We have now seen St Paul at Jerusalem and at Cesarea, and as we shall have occasion more than once again to behold him at both of these cities, it may not, perhaps, be deemed improper now to give a short description of their situation and extent. It will at least serve to prevent in-

terruption at a future period, when I allude to these remarkable events in the Apostle's life, which occurred at these distinguished places.

In the days of Paul, Cesarea was perhaps the most splendid city, as it undoubtedly was the greatest seaport of Palestine. It was erected by Herod the Great upon the site of an obscure fortress, about seventy-five miles distant from Jerusalem. It derived its name from Augustus Cæsar, to whom it was dedicated by the founder, in the twenty-eighth year of his reign. The most remarkable feature of the city was its magnificent harbor. It was of great extent, fully as large as that of Athens, and capable of containing a royal fleet. The natural situation of the coast did not admit of much protection; but to obviate this, Herod built a prodigious mole, in a semicircular form, extending far into the sea, and of such amazing strength as to resist every effort of the wildest tempest. One half of it was so formed as to present an impenetrable bulwark to the waves, and on the other half a strong wall, surmounted by many fortified turrets, was erected. In the centre, a quay, or landing-place, was built; and around the whole a pathway was formed, on which the inhabitants of the city might enjoy the soft breezes of the Mediterranean Sea. Near this harbor the residences of the mariners rose upon open arches; and beyond it, the proud

city, built in the shape of a crescent, ascended gradually from the sea. On a rising ground, at a short distance from the end of the quay, a temple was erected, which served as a guide, or beacon, to mariners ; and within its walls stood two colossal statues, one of Cæsar, and another of Imperial Rome personified. All the private houses in the city were built of marble ; and its many temples, its palaces, its theatres, and forum, of the fairest and richest architecture, were of the same material. The building of this magnificent city commenced shortly before the Christian æra, occupied twelve years, and had only been finished about fifteen years before the period of the Apostle's embarkation from it.

With regard to the Christian church established at Cesarea, it flourished till the seventh century, when the city was captured by the Saracens. But before this event happened, a fame, which was destined to outlive its marble walls, had been conferred upon Cesarea. It was there that the prophet Agabus foretold that Paul should be bound at Jerusalem, and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles ; it was there that the Apostle was confined for two years ; it was there that he was tried before Felix and Festus ; it was there that Cornelius the centurion, who was baptized by St Peter, lived ; it was there that Philip, the deacon, and his four daughters,

distinguished by the spirit of prophecy, dwelt ; and it was there that Herod, even in the midst of his own splendid palaces, arrayed in cloth of silver and in cloth of gold, surrounded by fawning courtiers, and an applauding multitude, borne up with pride, and seated on his jewelled throne, was at once struck dead, and devoured of worms, a loathsome and disgusting spectacle, because he assumed unto himself the glory which was due to God.

Now, should we journey to Palestine, to gaze upon the fair city of the Apostle's day, our journey would indeed be vain. The Arabs still call it Kissary; and perhaps this would be one of the few associations which might enable us to discern its site. Its marble halls and palaces are gone — its temples — its theatres — its forum have disappeared ; the dwellings of the many are levelled with the dust ; and, if a single trace of them is to be found, it is in a shapeless mass, or mound, of blackened earth. The waves, it is true, still beat against the ruins of the mole, for the storms and tempests of nearly two thousand years have not been able to effect the entire demolition of that stupendous work. Its huge remains are still to be seen ; and here and there the crumbling ruins of its strongest towers. But the whole surrounding country is a sandy desert ; the waste and silent desolation

of which is only disturbed by the angry howlings of a few solitary beasts of prey.

The fate of Jerusalem has been different ; it has witnessed many reverses. In the day of its splendor its magnificence was beyond the power of language to describe. In point of situation its advantages were great. Placed in the very centre of Judæa, it was built upon three hills, which arose like terraces, the one above the other. The natural position of these hills was extremely strong, being surrounded by deep valleys and precipitous rocks, which rendered the approach of an enemy to the city both difficult and dangerous. But the safety of a place destined to experience the hardships of many wars, was not left to depend upon natural position only. It was surrounded by three strong and apparently invulnerable walls. Within the innermost of the three walls the king's palace stood, enclosed in another wall, of equal height with that around the city. It was ornamented with many towers, of a fair and beauteous architecture ; and well did this bright palace deserve to be so guarded, for it was built of the finest marble and the rarest wood, and ornamented with a great variety of precious stones.

But the most remarkable building in Jerusalem was the Temple. It rose in the pride of beauty, itself resembling another city. In general appearance, it was imposing and magnifi-

cent in the extreme. It was built entirely of white marble, every separate mass of which was of a size scarcely to be imagined. When viewed from a distance, it had the appearance of a mountain covered with snow, so exquisite was the whiteness of its polished marble ; and when the sun shone, the gazer could scarcely look upon the brightness of its splendor, on account of the dazzling light reflected from the silver and golden plates with which it was adorned. The roof and other parts were of cedar wood, beautifully engraved. The gates were of immense magnitude, richly wrought, and ornamented with plates of gold and silver. The furniture of this gorgeous temple, was worthy of the building. The curtains belonging to the different parts of it were of the richest materials, the most splendid colors, and exquisite embroidery. The candlestick with its seven branches, the altar in the temple, and the whole number of the consecrated vessels, used in the numerous observances of the ceremonial law, were of the purest gold, and many of them inlaid with precious gems.

Such was the temple and its appurtenances, when the disciple of a lowly Saviour went up to it to pray. It had not been completed many years, and was then in the height of its glory and its splendor. *Now* a mock temple is built on Mount Moriah ; and a Mahometan mosque,

into which no Christian dare enter, occupies the place where the holy of holies once stood.

Of the general appearance of the city, and of the Temple, taken together, I do not believe that any language could convey an adequate idea to the mind. But let the reader fancy himself travelling through a dry and arid waste of sand, when suddenly, upon a fair hill side, a place of towers and palaces bursts upon his view : see the gilded roofs of its many temples — the dazzling whiteness of its marble towers, so exquisitely built that each, apparently, forms but one solid mass, cut from the rock whereon it stood — the heavy splendor of its massy walls — the beauteous architecture of its pillared gates, smiling in the light of a summer sun, or calmly reposing beneath the sleepy stillness of a cloudless sky, while the deep foliage of the clustering vine clothed the neighboring valleys, and climbed over the surrounding rocks — and he will behold Jerusalem as it was in those days. Well, then, might the exiled Jew exclaim, ‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning !’

About sixty years before the birth of Christ, it was besieged by Pompey, taken, and made tributary to the Roman power.

In after years, during the reign of Antigonus, the city was taken by Herod and Sosius, and

the inhabitants — men, women, and children — were indiscriminately slaughtered.

The last and most famous siege sustained by the Jerusalem of the sacred writings, was that by Titus, which terminated in its total and irretrievable ruin, in the seventieth year of the Christian era. The downfall of the city was preceded by those remarkable prodigies which our Saviour foretold would intimate its destruction.

The poor despised race of Israel have since, for a period of nearly eighteen hundred years, been wanderers upon the earth. Their city and their country are trodden under foot, and they themselves are dispersed throughout every nation under the sun. But, in the midst of all their sorrows, they still look for the day when they shall again be gathered together ; for the hour when their home, in its ancient splendor, shall be restored ; and still, in their hearts' core, they fondly cherish the numerous melancholy and beautiful lamentations of their forefathers over their fallen kingdom and their ruined state.

About sixty years after the terrible destruction by Titus, a new city was built on Mount Calvary. This modern Jerusalem has somewhat shared the fate of that which stood before it.

In appearance the modern Jerusalem has no pretensions to be likened to the ancient city.

It is built on two small hills situated in the midst of a barren land. Its boundaries are the valley of Jehoshaphat on the east, the valley of Siloam and Hinnom on the south, and the valley of Rephaim on the west. It contains from twelve to fifteen thousand inhabitants of all sects and denominations. Although not of great extent, however, it is a respectable looking town ; and, from being inclosed with high embattled walls, containing within their circumference several mosques, whose domes and minarets rise to a considerable height, it has, when viewed from a distance, somewhat of an imposing aspect.

The supposed sites of many of the remarkable spots mentioned in the sacred writings are still pointed out ; — the tower of Uriah — the pool of Bathsheba — the pool of Siloam, a dirty little puddle with scarcely a drop of water in it — the tombs of Zecharia and of Absalom — the field of blood, purchased with the thirty pieces of silver for which our Saviour was betrayed — the rock on which Jesus sat when he foretold the destruction of the temple — the place where Judas betrayed him with a kiss — the house of Ananias, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, wherein Peter denied our Lord — Calvary — Golgotha — Mount Sion — Jehoshaphat — and a hundred others ; but we know what credit to give to these tales of interested guides, when we are made aware that not even the site of

the Jerusalem of sacred history is known — not a trace of it remains — not a monument of Jewish times is standing. The very course of its walls is changed — Calvary, which was *without* the ancient city, is within the modern town — the ploughshare and the spade have been drawn across Mount Zion — and *Jerusalem* is, indeed, no more. But in the Apostle's day it was not so. It then stood in all the glory I have attempted to describe.

QUESTIONS.

What motives could probably have urged the Apostle to go from Damascus to Arabia ?

How much time did he probably spend there, and how was he occupied ?

What method did the Jews of Damascus take to make Paul their prisoner ?

By what means did he escape from them ?

Where did he go, and for what purpose ?

Why did the Apostle leave Jerusalem, and to what place did he go ?

Where was Cesarea situated ?

What is said of its harbor, and of the general appearance of the city ?

What occurrences transpired in this place ?

What is the present condition of this once flourishing city ?

How was Jerusalem situated ?

What is said of its natural position ?

Where was the king's palace, and what is said of it ?

What is said of the Temple, and its general appearance ?

Of its furniture ?

What was the general appearance of the city ?

How many times was Jerusalem besieged by the Romans ?

What has been the condition of the Jews since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus ?

What is said of modern Jerusalem ?

What credit is to be given to the localities pointed out to the traveller.

CHAPTER IV.

ANTIOCH — SELEUCIA — SALAMIS — PAPHOS.

WE must now, after the long digression in the last chapter, return to the Apostle, whom we left on his voyage from Cesarea to Tarsus. Having arrived in safety at the latter place, he abode there for a period of between five and six years. We are not told in what manner he was received by his townsmen, but the fact of his having established his head-quarters with them for so long a time, argues that no evil disposition, at least, was manifested towards him. He continued however to propagate the gospel, not only preaching it throughout all the neighboring parts of Cilicia, and bringing over many converts to the faith, but even planting several churches there. The good seed which he had sowed in Judæa also, began to show forth its first fruits about this time ; for in consequence of an unexpected persecution of the Jews themselves, by the Emperor Caligula, they ceased,

for a time, to persecute the Christians, and the churches had rest and flourished exceedingly.

The unremitting employment of St Paul was thus continued, until, in the course of time, Barnabas, who had been for a considerable period at Antioch, came to solicit his assistance in the cultivation of the wide-spread field of Christianity which existed there. With a glad heart the Apostle accompanied this zealous disciple thither, and continued with him to preach the faith of Christ, and to propagate the gospel for upwards of a year. Their joint exertions were attended with much success, and so numerous and honorable were the converts they made, that by a public act and declaration of the whole church, those who had been formerly known by the despised name of Nazarenes among the Jews, and stigmatised with that of Galileans by the Gentiles, were associated as a recognized body corporate under the honorable and distinguished name of CHRISTIANS. Nor was it in any wretched corner, or despicable place, that this was done. It was in the face of day, and within the walls of the rich and splendid capital of Syria ; for Antioch, at that period, was adorned with sumptuous palaces and temples ; strongly and beautifully fortified both by nature and by art ; and, from its proud height, looked down upon the bright

stream of the Orontes, which bore the wealth of a hundred nations within its walls.

Thus, within the short period of ten years after the ascension of HIM who had been despised of men, mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and finally put to a cruel and ignominious death, that sect, of which he was the founder, publicly and honorably obtained, in one of the most powerful and splendid cities of the East, that never-to-be-forgotten name which has distinguished it through every succeeding age, and will distinguish it through many an age and generation yet to come.

Thus, in Antioch, where for many ages the church continued so famous, the Disciples were first called Christians; and such *then* was Antioch, the residence of the governor of the eastern provinces of the Roman empire. But if we now look for it we shall not find it. The Persians, the Saracens, and the Turks, have alternately wrought the work of ruin upon it. Like other cities of the East, its glory is for ever gone, and although the name of Christian may still be heard there, the spirit of christianity has long since departed from its site.*

During the residence of Paul and Barnabas at this splendid city, certain prophets, and,

* The Antioch of modern times was destroyed by an earthquake in 1822.

among them, Agabus, arrived from Jerusalem. This holy man, enlightened by the Spirit, foretold that a fearful famine should thereafter reign throughout *all the world*, as the Roman empire was then proudly called. Accordingly this famine commenced in the second, or as some suppose, in the fourth year of the reign of Claudius Cæsar, and soon after rose to so fearful a height, particularly in Judæa, that thousands of human beings perished from absolute want of food. To relieve the distresses of their brethren, as much as lay in their power, the disciples at Antioch, moved by the pure spirit of christianity, immediately raised a contribution among themselves, and, when a considerable sum had been collected, sent it by the hands of Paul and Barnabas to the elders at Jerusalem.

With glad hearts these two intimate friends went upon their way, rejoicing in their charitable errand. It had been the custom of the Jews, in their various dispersions, to send the necessaries of life into the land of Canaan, for the sustenance of the poor; and now it gladdened the heart of the Apostle to think, that even in Jerusalem, he would be able to show the unbelieving Jews, that they could not outdo the despised disciples of the new religion; nay more, that while they only extended their charity to those more immediately connected with themselves, the Christians of Antioch, the great-

er part of whom were Gentile converts, at once stretched forth their hands to the relief of their Jewish brethren.

It was in the course of his short stay in the holy city, at this time, that, having gone into the court of the Temple to pray, according to the custom of the Jews, Paul had the remarkable ecstasy or trance to which I have alluded in a former chapter. During its continuance he received a direct intimation from our Lord, to make haste and quit Jerusalem, because the Jews would not receive his testimony there. The spirit of the Apostle, however, rebelled against this order. He deemed that the knowledge of his conversion, his former preaching at Damascus, his change of life, and the testimony he bore to the truth of the Gospel at Jerusalem itself, would certainly induce the Jews to receive it. But this was weighing his own wisdom in the balance with that of God, and the order was quickly repeated; 'Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.'

Having received this reiterated command, the Apostle, soon after, and probably before the persecution under Herod commenced, accompanied by Barnabas, and John Mark, his nephew, departed on his return to Antioch, where, after a perilous journey, he once more arrived.

This part of the Apostle's life, I think, serves to show, that while his chief occupation was to

minister to the spiritual comforts of his brethren, their bodily wants were not neglected by him. The journey from Antioch to Jerusalem is nearly three hundred miles, and of a dangerous and toilsome nature ; yet, when called upon to relieve the wants of the brethren, he did not hesitate to undertake this long journey ; and, when these wants were relieved, and his duty called upon him to return to the church he had left for a season, he sought no repose nor rest, but forthwith proceeded once more to retrace his weary steps.

Arrived at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas again joined themselves unto their brethren ; and, as they were together, engaged in prayer and fasting, the Holy Ghost, in confirmation of the intimation given to the Apostle at Jerusalem, with an audible voice, desired that these two might henceforth be separated for the work whereunto they had been called : that is, in so far at least as regards Paul, to the preaching to the Gentiles at large, to which duty he had been ordained at his conversion.

In obedience to the order thus miraculously confirmed, three of the most holy of the disciples at Antioch — Simon, Lucius, and Manaen, all men endowed with the spirit of prophecy, laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, and having prayed, blessed them, and sent

them forth to labor in the work to which they had been so miraculously ordained.

Accompanied by John, to minister to them, they accordingly proceeded by land to Seleucia. This was a fortified sea-port town of Syria, situated a short way to the north of the mouth of the Orontes, and so named from its founder Seleucius Nicator.

The Apostle and his companions did not, however, remain to preach there. Immediately after their arrival, they embarked for the celebrated island of Cyprus, which is situated in the Mediterranean Sea, about sixty miles southwest of Seleucia. That it was a place of great importance, may be gathered from the known fact, that it contained at least fifteen cities of considerable note, and was at one time divided into no fewer than nine petty kingdoms. This, combined with the fact of its being the native land of Barnabas, and the residence of some christians who had fled from the Jewish persecution, probably induced Paul and his companions to commence their ministerial office there. They may likewise have been influenced by the knowledge of the gross idolatry and infamous wickedness into which the blinded inhabitants had fallen.

The first place at which he landed was Salamis, afterwards called Constantia, and subsequently Famagusta. In the Apostle's day it

was a famed and extensive city, situated on the eastern shores of Cyprus, and being the first place at which christianity was preached, it was, in primitive times, constituted the metropolitan city of the island. It is also said, at a subsequent period, to have been the scene where Barnabas, the beloved companion and fellow-laborer of the Apostle, suffered martyrdom.

On being established at Salamis, the Apostle and his companion immediately proceeded to visit the Jewish synagogues, of which there were many in the city. In one or other of these they daily preached the gospel, and so eminently successful was their preaching, that in a short time many converts to christianity were made. We are not informed who these converts were, but it is more than probable that the greater number of them were Gentile *proselytes*, that is, Gentiles who had previously been converted from idolatry by the Jews, and by them taught the worship of the only true God.

It is true, however, that both at Salamis and elsewhere, the Apostle first offered his message to the Jews, entering into their synagogues, and even avoiding, or at least not tarrying at those cities in which no synagogues were established. This line of conduct he adopted, in consequence of his interpretation of our Saviour's command, when he sent the Apostles forth to preach. 'Go

not,' he said, 'into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not ; *but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*' At first, viewing this command according to the strictest letter of the law, the Apostles did not conceive themselves at liberty to preach to the Gentiles at all, but subsequently, when its true spirit was better understood, they viewed it in the same light that Paul had done, as an injunction, merely that they should *first* offer the glad tidings to the Jews, before holding them forth to the despised and idolatrous Gentile nations.

Having finished the work given them to do at Salamis, the Apostle and his companions crossed the island, preaching at the various towns and cities in their route, till they came to Paphos, *then* a celebrated city on its western coast. Here the most celebrated temple of the Goddess Venus was erected, and so devoted was the attachment of her followers, that one of her distinguishing names was that of the Paphian and Cyprian queen. A wide field, on which his labor might be expended, accordingly lay in the Apostle's sight. No way discouraged, however, by the bleak aspect before him, he stoutly laid his hand to the work, and so successful was his ministry, that ere many days had elapsed, the report of his preaching having reached the ears of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul or governor of

the island, a man of much prudence, he sent for Barnabas and Paul, that he too might hear the word of God.

In the events which followed, the hand of the Almighty is apparent. Among the council of the governor there was one Barjesus, (or Elymas, an Arabic word, signifying a sorcerer or magician,) who fearing his credit might be lost in the eyes of the people, if the Roman governor should be converted to Christianity, mightily withstood the preaching of Barnabas and Paul; disputing with them in the governor's presence, performing many false miracles, using all manner of subtilty to defeat their end, and holding them and the doctrines they preached alike in much contempt. In the true spirit of Christianity, Paul for some time bore the revilings of this wicked man, till worn out with his importunities, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, he fixed his eyes steadfastly upon him and exclaimed, 'Oh! full of all subtilty and mischief — thou child of the devil — thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be *blind*, not seeing the sun for a season.' Even while the Apostle spoke, darkness, like a thick mist, fell upon the sorcerer, and he, blind and helpless, 'went about, seeking some one to lead him by the hand;' — 'the vengeance of God,' as an

old writer quaintly remarks, 'observing herein a kind of just proportion, that he should be punished with the loss of his bodily eyes, who had so wilfully and maliciously shut the eyes of his mind against the light of the gospel, and had endeavored to keep not only himself, but others, under so much blindness and darkness.'

On beholding this, the first of the Apostle's miracles, the words of the sorcerer seemed light as air, and the governor at once became a convert to the Christian faith. The conversion of a person filling so distinguished a situation, induced the inhabitants of Cyprus to listen with much attention to the doctrines of the Apostle, and although it is historically known that the worship of Venus continued in the island for nearly four hundred years after this period, many persons following the example of their wise and prudent leader, embraced the Christian faith.

The success attending the Apostle's mission to Cyprus, therefore, was considerable, and the religion thus established by Paul and Barnabas, has ever since maintained a footing there; although I am constrained to add, that it now stands at a low ebb, and like the country itself, has fallen into a most wretched and desolate condition.

A great change now took place in the prospects of the Apostle. From the day of the con-

version of the Roman governor, as I have formerly mentioned, he assumed the name of Paul. From the same period also, the sacred historian, inverting the course he had formerly followed, invariably names him before Barnabas, in all those acts in which they were jointly concerned ; and the high nature of his Apostolic character having been fully manifested, as well by the eminent success which attended his preaching, as by the miracles he wrought, the palm of superiority is henceforth, upon all occasions, yielded to St Paul.

QUESTIONS.

Where were the disciples of our blessed Lord first called Christians ?

Where was Antioch ?

For what purpose did Paul and Barnabas visit Jerusalem ?

For what purpose soon after their return to Antioch were they separated from their brethren ?

What was the Apostle's course of conduct at Salamis ?

Where was Paphos, and for what celebrated ?

What occurrences attended the preaching of the Apostle in Paphos ?

What was the success of the Apostle's mission in Cyprus ?

CHAPTER V.

PERGA — ANTIOCH, IN PISIDIA — ICONIUM — LYS-
TRA — DERBE — ATTALIA.

ON leaving Cyprus, Paul, with his companions, Barnabas and John, embarked at Paphos, and, crossing part of the Mediterranean Sea, proceeded to Pamphylia, a considerable province of Asia Minor. Landing near the mouth of the river Caystras, or Cestos, after a voyage of above 140 miles, they proceeded to Perga, the capital of the province, situated on the banks of the river, about twelve miles distant from the sea. The inhabitants of this city, which is famed as the birth-place of Apollonius, the geometrician, were worshippers of the goddess Diana.

The Apostle, however, did not remain any length of time at Perga. He was met and opposed in his preaching by the numerous priests of Diana who resided there ; and although his

firmness and courage could not be shaken by such opposition, the soil did not appear to be one in which the good seed could at that time, be effectually sown. At a subsequent period his preaching appears to have been attended with more success ; for a Christian church of considerable eminence was established at Perga, and flourished till towards the close of the eighth century.

The firmness which seems to have formed so distinguishing a feature is the conduct of the Apostle, does not, however, appear to have communicated itself to the character of his companion John. Terrified by the threatening language and conduct of the idolatrous priests, and discouraged by the numerous and increasing difficulties attendant upon their undertaking, he deserted the good cause, and, leaving Barnabas and Paul, returned to Jerusalem alone.

Taking Titus with them, in the place of John, the Apostle and Barnabas next proceeded to Antioch the capital of the small province of Pisidia, and situated about ninety miles to the north of Perga. This town, in which there were a great number of Jews resident, was also built by Seleucius, in honor of his father ; and, to distinguish it from the numerous other cities of the same name in Western Asia, was usually denominated Antiocha Pisidiæ. It is probable that there were more Jewish synagogues than

one erected here. It is certain that there was at least one synagogue in the place, and to it St Paul, on the first Sabbath after his arrival, according to his invariable custom, repaired to attend divine worship.

The worship of the synagogue consisted in reading, first, the *Shemoneh Eshreth*, or the famous eighteen prayers, said to be composed by *Ezra*; secondly, the *Shema*, consisting of three selected passages from the books of Deuteronomy and Numbers; thirdly, a section from the Five Books of the Law, which were so divided, that the whole law was annually read; and, lastly, a portion or section from the Prophets. This service was always performed by the established reader of the synagogue, who delivered himself from a desk or pulpit in the centre of it; but after it was over, any person, possessing sufficient learning or knowledge of the scriptures, was at liberty to address the congregation on whatever moral or religious subject he thought fit. Strangers, known to possess talent, were usually, by way of compliment, first invited to perform this duty; and accordingly, upon the present occasion, the reading and expounding of the law and the prophets, and the other parts of the service being finished, the Apostle, who had already distinguished himself in the city, was invited by the ruler of the synagogue to address the people.

This invitation he accepted, and ascending the pulpit in the centre of the synagogue, from it delivered the first of his discourses which has been handed down to posterity ; preaching that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by David, and illustrating and enforcing the truth of his arguments by reference to those passages of the Prophets with which the Jews themselves were undoubtedly familiar. The sermon delivered upon this occasion forms an admirable example of the Apostle's style of preaching, and also of the nature of the arguments he used for convincing and converting the unbelieving Jews, as well as the idolatrous Gentiles. The primitive eloquence of his discourse is beautiful, and his reasoning irresistible, and both were attended with effect. The Gentiles publicly besought him that he would preach the same doctrines to them on the following Sabbath ; and, on leaving the synagogue, Barnabas and he were followed by many of the Jews and proselytes, who had listened with much attention to the Apostle's discourse, that they might receive farther instructions from them, and be confirmed in their belief.

To these, of course, the Apostle communicated all the information that divine inspiration enabled him to bestow ; and the intervening week he employed in zealously preaching throughout the city, till the next Sabbath day

arrived, when the whole inhabitants, Jews, idolaters, and proselytes, with one accord, crowded to the synagogue to hear him. But this popularity was more than the unbelieving Jews had counted upon; and beholding the great concourse of people following him, they were filled with envy, and so far from again courteously inviting him to preach, they contradicted his doctrines, and blasphemed and reviled both him and the Master in whose work he was so able and zealous a servant. That spirit of rebuke which shown in the Apostle upon so many occasions was now called forth. No ways daunted by the opposition he met with, but boldly addressing himself to these blasphemers, he told them that it was necessary the gospel should first be preached to them; but since they chose to reject it, and thrust away the blessings they had been offered, he would henceforth, as the Lord had commanded him, turn to the Gentiles, and preach the glad tidings, that for them the Saviour had died, and that he was a salvation not to the Jews only, but even unto all such, of whatever denomination or persuasion, as should believe in his name. This declaration the Jews laughed to scorn; but when the Gentiles heard it, and knew that, many ages ago, such things had been prophesied of them, and that their lost race was to be received within the pale of the Christian church, without being subjected to the

constraints imposed by the law, they rejoiced and were exceeding glad, and with open arms received the Apostle, and with deep reverence and attention listened to the doctrines he taught.

Antioch, in Pisidia, therefore now acquired the fame of being the first city in which the gospel was publicly preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, as Antioch, in Syria, had formerly been the first in which the disciples had been recognized by the name of Christians. But the labors of the Apostle were not confined to the city merely ; he made many excursions into all parts of the surrounding country, for the purpose of preaching to and instructing the idolaters.

Envy and persecution, however, will ever follow the noblest of the human race. The great success which attended the Apostle's preaching, filled the minds of the unbelieving Jews with dismay. They sought to compass his destruction ; but being themselves destitute of authority, in a city of the Gentiles, they cunningly persuaded certain women of high rank and influence, who had been converted to the Jewish religion, to adopt their views. It has been observed, by some ecclesiastical writers, 'that there never was any heresy and schism in the Christian church but what was, at the beginning, fomented by women of wealth and distinction.' In the present instance, these zealous proselytes combined with the unbelieving Jews,

and stirring up the chief men and rulers of the city, raised so violent a persecution against the Apostle and his companions, that they were compelled to flee, not only from the city, but also beyond the adjacent territory subject to the dominion of its rulers.

Upon this occasion, we have an instance of the Apostle's adherence to the customs of the Jews. Among that peculiar people, all dust which came from the land of the Gentiles was reckoned of so defiling a nature, that they would not even suffer herbs to be brought into the land of Israel from a heathen country, lest some part of the soil should accidentally adhere to, and be brought along with them. To shake the dust from their feet, therefore, was a mark of special abhorrence and contempt, and this mark St Paul now employed ; for, on leaving Antioch, he shook the dust from his feet, as a testimony against his persecutors that he regarded them as infidels and heathens, the very soil of whose country was defiling. He then departed from their coasts, and came with his companions to Iconium, which is about eighty miles to the east of Antioch. It was then a large and populous city, situated upon the banks of the lake Troglis, in the richest and most fertile part of Lycaonia, of which province it was the capital. The inhabitants were composed of Jews, Greek proselytes, and idolatrous Gentiles.

On the first opportunity after reaching this city, the Apostle, according to his usual custom, repaired to the synagogue, and there publicly preached the doctrines of the new faith, and that with so much success, that a great multitude both of the Jews and proselytes believed. He also continued earnest in his endeavors to convert the idolatrous Gentiles, and so large a party did he at last gain over to his side, that the unbelieving Jews, notwithstanding their enmity, dared not for a long period attempt publicly to proceed against him; but they at last making foul use of the authority which they too often possessed over the minds of proselytes, succeeded once more in stirring up many of the people, and also the magistrates of the city against the Apostle. These, combining together, formed the design of stoning Paul as a blasphemer against the law. This was the usual punishment of such a crime, and a fearful punishment it was. God, however, protected the instrument he had seen fit to employ; for the Apostle being made aware of the intention of the Jews, in obedience to the command of his Divine Master, 'when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another,' immediately fled, with his companions, from Iconium.

With regard to this, and similar passages in the Apostle's life, it may undoubtedly be asked, whether he, who possessed the power of work-

ing miracles to save others, did not also possess that power to save himself. But to this question I should think it a sufficient answer to observe that, although the Apostle was endowed with this extraordinary power on purpose to strengthen and confirm the preaching of the gospel committed to his care, he was not personally exempted from persecution, nor from that tribulation through which we must all enter into the kingdom of heaven.

As at Antioch, so at Iconium St Paul left many firm and zealous professors of Christianity behind him. These propagated the true faith so successfully, that for a period of 800 years after the Apostle's day the Christian church continued to flourish there. Indeed, the religion, so earnestly and uncompromisingly taught by him, can scarcely be said ever to have totally disappeared from the city. It is one of the few places where his voice was heard, that survives the wreck of time, and has not yet fallen into ruin and decay. It is now known by the name of Cogni, or Konich,¹ the most remarkable and noted city in Caramania; and although no longer the seat of empire of the Turkish kings of Lesser Asia, which at one period it was, is still of so much importance, as to be the residence of a considerable Basha. It is surrounded by a strong wall of several miles in circumference, which is fortified by 108 splendid

towers, erected at equal distances upon it. The infidel alone, it is true, is now allowed to inhabit the city, properly so called, but many Armenians and Christians of the Greek church, with their archbishop, still reside in its suburbs.

On leaving this yet remarkable place, the Apostle and his companions fled to Lystra, another city of Lyaconia, situated about forty-five miles south from Iconium. This city is celebrated as the birth-place of Timothy, who was converted to the Christian religion by Paul, on his first visit to it. The inhabitants were idolaters, and much given to the worship of Jupiter, who was their presiding god, and the tutelary deity of the town. Nevertheless the Apostle's preaching was not altogether without success, for he made converts of Lois, a Jewish woman of some consideration, and her daughter Eunice, the mother of Timothy.

By far the most remarkable, however, of his acts at Lystra, was his miraculous cure of one who had been impotent in his feet, or feeble and helpless from his youth. While preaching in a public place, Paul beheld the eyes of this man, who was called Eneas, fixed, as with fond expectation upon him; and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, he called to him, and with a loud voice commanded him to arise and stand upon his feet. Immediately the lame man not only arose and stood, but also leaped and walked,

giving praise to God for the wondrous cure He had performed. The poor man knew and acknowledged the power by which his cure had been effected, but the multitude around were of a different opinion. They mistook the instruments for the Author, and, shouting aloud, they lifted up their voices, and cried that the gods had come down to them in the likeness of men.

The descent of the gods in the disguise of creatures of the earth, was a very common idea amongst heathen nations. While such, therefore, was the idea of these unfortunate heathens, there is nothing remarkable in their supposing that the gods had really deigned to appear amongst them. Nor is it more to be wondered at, that they should immediately assign to Barnabas and Paul the names of their own peculiar deities. Barnabas they called Jupiter, or the father of the Gods, on account of his stately, grave, and commanding aspect; Paul they imagined Mercury, — or *Hermes*, the interpreter of the gods, as he is sometimes called — on account of the eloquence of his speech, and the peculiarly light and active formation of his person.

After having thus distinguished the Apostle and his companion, the people, with one accord, rushed to the temple of Jupiter, which stood without the gates of the city, and making the priests acquainted with the honor which had

befallen them, the Chief Priest immediately came forth, and bringing oxen and garlands with him, proceeded to the gate of the house where Paul and Barnabas lodged. On arriving there, he sought to crown them with the garlands, and to sacrifice the oxen to their worship; but the Apostles, so far from being disturbed by the giddy height to which the adulation of the people would have raised them, armed their minds with that humility which so well becometh the religion they professed, and rushing amidst the populace, rent their clothes, as a mark of detestation and abhorrence of their conduct, and telling them they were men and not gods, besought them to desist from their gross idolatry and mistaken worship. Upon this occasion the Apostle delivered a most animated address; but, notwithstanding the boldness of his conduct, and the striking energy of his language, it was with much difficulty that he succeeded in preventing the people from doing sacrifice to Barnabas and himself as gods.

Nothing, however, can be more uncertain than the breath of popular favor. It is proverbially fickle — ‘a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.’ Ere many days had elapsed, certain of the unbelieving Jews and idolaters of Antioch and Iconium, filled with the spirit of persecution against Paul, followed him to Lystra, and persuaded the peo-

ple that those whom they so recently had adored, and would have elevated to the rank of gods, were little better than two wicked magicians, whose object was to overturn and ruin all that was held estimable or holy by the Jews and Gentiles. Yielding too ready an assent to these malicious statements, the credulous multitude, forgetting the tenor of his life, and the miracles he had performed, rose with one consent, and rushing to the house of the Apostle, drew him forth, and having stoned him, dragged him outside of the city gates, and left him unburied on the high way, believing him to be dead.

To all human appearance the day of the Apostle's usefulness was now forever gone. But his Master had other work for him to do, and when his supposed murderers had retired, and the disciples stood around him, mourning over the fate of their beloved teacher and companion, he suddenly arose, and all undismayed by the fear of his enemies, in the evening returned to that city, from which, in the morning, he had been dragged as dead.

It is not unworthy of remark, that on this occasion the Apostle himself suffered the same cruel punishment which he had been so instrumental and active in bringing on the martyr Stephen. But, unlike him, he arose, almost immediately, as it were from the bed of death.

It would appear, however, that the Apostle

was convinced that his presence at Lystra could not be of farther benefit at this time, for on the following day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe, another city of Lycaonia, situated about twenty miles to the south-east of Lystra. Gaius, a disciple of St Paul, and St John, were natives of this city, but it is not otherways a place of any note.

In Derbe and in the neighboring regions of Phrygia and Galatia, the Apostle continued to preach the gospel uninterruptedly and with great success for a considerable time.

Having come thus far, the Apostle now deemed it prudent to terminate his onward journey for the present, and from Derbe, accordingly, he set out upon his return to Antioch, in Syria. But it was far from his intention idly to retrace his steps. He determined to revisit those churches he had already planted, and, regardless of his enemies, to enter again into those cities in which he had suffered so much persecution. In pursuance of this design, he returned from Derbe to Lystra, from Lystra to Iconium, and from Iconium to Antioch in Pisidia; in each of these places strengthening and confirming in the faith the churches he had formerly planted, and, with solemn prayer and fasting, ordaining bishops, presidents, and deacons, in order that the newly made converts might not run the chance of again relapsing into idolatry.

From Antioch, the Apostle proceeded through the province of Pisidia, and came again to Perga in Pamphylia, at which place, it will be remembered, he formerly remained but a short time. This may probably have been the reason which induced him to pass a longer time there on his return.

Leaving Perga, he next bent his steps to Attalia, another city of Pamphylia, founded by Attalus, king of Pergamus, from whom it derived its name. It is situated on a fine bay in the Mediterranean sea, about thirty miles south west of Perga. There Paul, according to his invariable practice, preached the gospel, and held forth the things of salvation to the inhabitants, but with what success we are not informed; nor, indeed, do we know more of the Christianity of this place, than that the inhabitants, during the fifth and sixth centuries, had a bishop.

At Attalia, Paul and his companions embarked on board a vessel bound for Antioch in Syria, where they once more arrived in safety, after an absence of nearly three years, occupied in these truly perilous but highly praiseworthy and successful expeditions.

QUESTIONS.

To what place did the Apostle and his companions proceed from Cyprus?

For what was Perga celebrated?

In what consisted the worship of the synagogue?

What is said respecting the Apostle's preaching at Antioch in Pisidia?

What resulted from St Paul's success in preaching to the Gentiles?

What followed his preaching at Iconium?

What miracle did the Apostle perform at Lystra?

What exhibition of the fickleness of popular opinion did the Lystrians show?

What places did the Apostle visit on his return from Derbe to Antioch in Syria?

CHAPTER VI.

SCHISM IN THE CHURCH — COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM.

WE have hitherto beheld the Apostle contending with fierce and violent persecution, and seen him in arduous conflict with the avowed adversaries of his faith ; we have now to contemplate his character in a different point of view, and to look upon his conduct, while endeavoring to correct some dangerous mistakes and innovations that had already made their appearance in the infant church.

During the residence of the Apostle at Antioch, where he remained, at this period, for at least two full years, certain Jewish zealots, of the sect of the Pharisees, which, it will be remembered, was particularly strict and rigid in the outward observances of the law, arrived from Jerusalem, as if they had been sent or commissioned by the Apostles there. These zealots, led by Cerinthus, soon disturbed the peace of the church, and cre-

ated a considerable dissension in it, by preaching that circumcision, including the whole ceremonial law, was absolutely necessary to salvation. The minds of many of the Gentile converts were accordingly much staggered in their faith, which Paul and Barnabas perceiving, they immediately set about seriously controverting a doctrine so inconsistent with the free Gospel they had hitherto preached and taught. A great discussion consequently arose, which led to many conferences and disputations. It was at length proposed that the question should be decided by reference to the General Assembly of the Apostles at Jerusalem.

Fortunately this proposition met with the approbation of all concerned ; and Paul, leaving his anxious and trembling flock without their shepherd, for a season, proceeded with Barnabas and Titus, and some others who had been appointed to accompany him, to Jerusalem, to obtain the decision of the council upon this vitally important point.

On his journey he passed through the province of Phenicia, extending from the gulf of Issus to the termination of the ridges of Libanus and Antilibanus, and through the far-famed kingdom of Samaria, in both of which numerous converts to Christianity had been made. These he exhorted to remain steadfast in the faith, gladdening their hearts with the joyful tidings of the

great success he had met with in preaching to the Gentiles.

He thus, even when travelling with another and definite object in view, lost no opportunity of being useful; and continuing the same course till he arrived at Jerusalem, he there applied to Peter, James, and John, the principal Apostles and pillars of the church, to whom, as being the ministers of the circumcision, he related the object of his mission. He also, on many private occasions, detailed to them the eminent success of his preaching to the Gentile nations; and they who had not formerly, in any direct manner, recognized his high Apostolic character, being now satisfied that his knowledge of the gospel was equal to their own; his powers and gifts as great as theirs, and recalling to mind the words of our Saviour at his conversion, were at once convinced that his authority as an Apostle was also equal to their own, and accordingly extended the right hand of fellowship to him, publicly acknowledging him to be an Apostle, and confirming his mission especially to the Gentile nations.

It must be observed, however, that by this act they did not mean to limit his usefulness, or hinder him from preaching to the Jews, if occasion offered, any more than to exclude themselves, the ministers of the circumcision, from preaching to the Gentiles, if such should ever be

required of them. Their Lord and Master had sent them forth to preach the gospel to *all nations*, and the rule now laid down by them was merely intended for their *general* guidance, but not to apply to each special or particular case.

We must now bear in mind that the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles was not yet *publicly* known at Jerusalem. The Apostle himself tell us that all his communications regarding them were made *privately*, and only to such of the brethren as were of high reputation, lest the opposition which the line of conduct he had adopted would meet with from the more zealous of the *Jewish* believers, should bring discredit on the good cause, and make it appear that the race he had run, and the labor he had wrought had been vain. It is, therefore, obvious, that the question to be discussed in council, as to the observance of the ceremonial law, was not to be discussed as regarding the idolatrous Gentiles, but only as applicable to the Gentile proselytes who had been in the habit of attending the synagogues, and were presumed to be acquainted with the law. Viewing it in this light, the three eminent Apostles of the circumcision had no hesitation in at once making up their minds upon the point at issue. But they who so strenuously contended for the imposition of the Mosaic law, would not rest satisfied with their decision, but insisted upon a general council being called,

where the matter might be publicly canvassed and determined. The Apostles, accordingly, with the elders, and the brethren of the church at Jerusalem, assembled to constitute this famous council.

I do not think it would be attended with advantage to enter into any minute description of the proceedings of this assembly. A very general view of these will be sufficient. Having met, the question was formally proposed, and a great deal of discussion then arose among the brethren, and many arguments were advanced by those, especially of the sect of the Pharisees, who maintained the absolute necessity of observing the ceremonial law. These the Apostles quietly heard till every argument they could make use of was exhausted, when Peter rose, and detailing circumstances within his own knowledge and experience, reminded the assembly that he himself had been ordained of God to preach the gospel to Cornelius and other Gentiles, who had all been manifestly accepted of without circumcision, and had evidently received the Holy Ghost. Following the same line of argument, Paul and Barnabas then narrated the numerous instances of the conversion of the Gentiles which had come within their observation, the miracles and wonders which God had wrought amongst these cast-out nations, and the gifts of the Spirit which in numerous instances

had been fully and amply conferred upon them, although they had never been circumcised. From these facts they drew the indisputable conclusion, that God having put no difference betwixt Jew and Gentile — purifying the hearts of each by faith alone — they should not put a yoke which they themselves were unable to bear, upon the necks of the believing Gentiles.

Notwithstanding the powerful nature of these arguments, it would seem that it did not prove conclusive to the minds of the assembled council. A kind of compromise appears to have taken place, and it was finally determined by James, as president of the council, that although the Gentiles should *not* be subjected to the evident discouragement and restraints of the Mosaic law, they should be especially enjoined to abstain from meat offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. The wisdom that guided the imposing of these restrictions is apparent. It was the desire of James that the bonds which ought to unite every disciple of the Christian religion to his brother should gently be drawn more closely together, till a perfect union and fellowship was effected. Till, therefore, a better acquaintance with the gospel should teach both Jews and Gentiles how little depended upon many of their needless observances, the latter were enjoined so far to conform to the ceremonial law.

Such being the decision of this celebrated council, its decretal Epistle was written out, and delivered to Barnabas and Paul. That no doubt of the authenticity of this letter might exist, the council also adopted the very proper precaution of sending along with the Apostles, two approved and distinguished witnesses, who having been present at, and themselves taken part in the discussion, might testify to the more bigoted of the Jews, the absolute truth of its contents. These were Judas, surnamed Barsabas, the brother of Joses, and Silas, supposed to be the same person, who under the name of Sylvanus, is mentioned in the title of St Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians.

Thus accompanied the Apostle arrived once more at Antioch, where he found the believers awaiting his return, in much anxiety and suspense. It appears as if the existence of the new faith at this moment hung upon a thread. But the church was assembled; the decretal letter was read; and the minds of the Gentile converts were filled with joy to find that they were exempted from all the more minute and painful observances of the ceremonial law.

After this period, St Paul continued for a short space at Antioch, preaching throughout the city, adding new converts to the rapidly increasing church, and confirming in their faith those who had already been converted. He was

thus in the full exercise of his ministry, and like his blessed Master, continually doing good, when the Apostle Peter arrived at Antioch from Jerusalem. This celebrated character was received joyfully by his brethren in the ministry, and by no one more so than by Paul, who little imagined how soon he would be called on, in the discharge of his duty, to address him in the language of reproof. In conformity to the decree of the council, Peter, on his first arrival, did not hesitate freely to associate, converse, and eat with the Gentile converts. But a certain want of firmness and decision in the character of him who had denied his Lord soon appeared; for, on the arrival of certain zealous Jewish believers, sent by James from Jerusalem, he immediately withdrew himself from the society of the Gentiles. The consequence of this imprudent conduct on the part of so distinguished a leader in the church soon became apparent. The more zealous of the Jews were confirmed in the opinions they had formed, while the minds of the Gentile converts were filled with new doubts and fears. Even Barnabas himself did not entirely escape the corruption of his example, which St Paul perceiving, sharply and severely rebuked the impropriety of Peter's behaviour, in the face of the whole assembled church. The disputes about eating with the Gentiles, however, still continued, and were carried so high,

that many, who were well conversant with the truth, dissembled ; till the torrent at length became so strong, that a fearful schism in the church was threatened. This the Apostle dreaded, with an almost instinctive terror, and seeing that nothing but the most decided firmness and resolution could avert the impending calamity, he stepped forth, singly maintaining the purity of the gospel, and upon every occasion, boldly exposing and rebuking the dissemblers. His exertions were at last attended with effect ; the wildness of the torrent was stemmed, and the church rescued from the destruction which had well nigh overwhelmed it.

To a reflecting mind, such as that of the Apostle, this incident could not but convey a most impressive lesson. The danger, which had threatened the church at Antioch, in consequence of the timid compliance of its members and teachers, with the stern prejudices of the bigoted Jews, forcibly presented to his view the great hazard which the converted Gentiles of distant countries ran, of having their principles and religion corrupted by Judaizing teachers. Zealous for the truth and purity of the gospel, and totally unmindful of his own convenience, he therefore determined to undertake another long and perilous journey to all the churches he had planted, in order that their faith might be strengthened, and the danger of corruption

averted, by making each acquainted with the contents of the decree of the council of Jerusalem.

This determination the Apostle communicated to Barnabas, and proposed that he should go with him, which Barnabas at first agreed to do, but afterwards a discussion arose betwixt them, whether John should accompany them or not. Barnabas desired that he should, but to this St Paul strenuously objected — urging, with much appearance of justice, that he who had formerly deserted them in their time of need, could no longer be depended upon to render the assistance they required. Trifling as this subject of dispute may, at first sight, appear to be, the contention betwixt them ultimately grew so sharp that they left each other in anger, and departed — Barnabas with his nephew to Cyprus, his native place; and Paul, taking Silas with him in his stead, to the provinces of Syria and Cilicia, on his errand of mercy to the souls of the converts he had made in these regions. Thus the timid selfishness and love of ease exhibited by John in Pamphylia, finally led to the disagreement and separation of these two distinguished characters, who had so long been intimate friends and fellow laborers, and had hitherto evinced so much constancy, when nothing but difficulties appeared in the wide field of tribulation by which they were surrounded. They never met again on earth.

The cloud of anger, however, which darkened the Apostle's mind did not long remain there. He was a man, and subject to the passions of mankind, but probably deeply lamented, in secret, those gusts of intemperance into which the innate depravity of the human heart betrayed him. For, at an after period, we find him not only speaking in the highest terms of his beloved friend and companion, Barnabas, but with open arms and a glad heart, receiving John himself as his assistant in the ministry.

QUESTIONS.

What occasioned the schism in the church at Antioch ?

What course did the Apostle propose to take in order to heal the difficulties ?

Why did he communicate the conversion of the Gentiles privately to certain leading men ?

Who composed the council assembled at Jerusalem ?

Who was the president of it ?

What was the result of the deliberations ?

How was this decision received at Antioch ?

What caused the separation of Paul and Barnabas ?

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCHES IN SYRIA — CILICIA AND LYCAONIA RE-
VISITED — GALATIA — MYSIA — TROAS —
MACEDONIA.

FROM Antioch, Paul proceeded through the provinces of Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches in those parts, and delivering to each a copy of the decretal Epistle of the council at Jerusalem.

The sacred historian has given no account of the time or manner of planting the churches in Cilicia, nor of the person by whom they were established. But it is more than probable that those churches were instituted by Paul during his five or six years' residence at Tarsus. The evidence in favor of the Apostle is surely very strong, even independent of that afforded by his own proposal to Barnabas to go into every city, or place where they had *already* preached the word of God. Upon any other hypothesis it would be difficult to account for his preferring

the long and perilous route he now adopted by land, through Syria and Cilicia, and over Mount Taurus, to Derbe and Lystra, instead of proceeding from Antioch by sea, as he had done upon a former occasion.

Passing through Lycaonia the Apostle visited the church at Derbe, exhorting and confirming the Christians residing there, and thence proceeded on his way to Lystra.

On arriving at Lystra he found Timothy, whom he had formerly converted, much increased in knowledge and reputation among the brethren. This Timothy, concerning whom some remarkable prophecies of his usefulness in the gospel had been given, was the son of Eunice, a converted Jewess, but his father was a Greek. From his mother, a woman of exceeding faith, he had received all the advantages of a religious education, and a remarkable knowledge of the scriptures in early life. His character, too, as a young man of much piety and of amiable manners, was highly spoken of; and, in consequence, the Apostle was induced to assume him as an associate in his labors, not only with a view to his present usefulness, but also with the purpose of breeding him as his successor in the ministry after his death — an event which we must suppose to have been in the daily contemplation of the holy man.

Having visited these churches, and passed through the greater part of the surrounding countries, establishing others, and adding more converts daily to those already established, the Apostle, previous to his setting out on a more extended journey, with his new companion, judged it expedient that he should submit to the rite of circumcision.

When we remember, that, upon another occasion, the Apostle steadily refused to allow Titus to be circumcised, there appears at first sight to be some inconsistency in his conduct in this instance. But it may be easily explained and reconciled. The circumcision of Titus, although he was a Gentile, was insisted on as *necessary to his salvation*. Now, to this the Apostle would not consent, lest he should have appeared to compromise the liberty of the gospel, and to renounce the doctrine of justification, through faith in Christ alone. But the case of Timothy was different. Wherever the Apostle went, he was still in the habit of first offering the gospel to the Jews, but had he been accompanied by an uncircumcised Gentile as his assistant, his usefulness, in one branch of his ministry, at least, would have been much impeded. He would not therefore have been acceptable to the Jews, and rather than allow this stumbling-block to remain in his way, the Apostle so far accommodated himself

to the prejudices of some, as to allow, what, in fact, was now but an indifferent ceremony, to be performed. So far, therefore, from acting inconsistently or improperly, the Apostle exhibited both meekness and self-denial, in order to the advancement of the gospel; and this is just one, among many others, of those instances, in which ‘with the Jews he became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews.’

Leaving Lystra, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, Paul passed by Antioch, considerably to the east, and proceeded through Phrygia, a province of Lesser Asia, containing several cities of considerable note. The inhabitants of this country were proverbially of a servile and stupid temper.

Among these benighted people the Apostle does not appear, at this period, to have made any stay. He passed on to Galatia, another province of Asia Minor, which contained no fewer than twenty-two considerable cities; but not many years before the arrival of Paul, it had been ravaged by the Romans, and along with several adjacent places reduced into the situation of a Roman province.

Here the Apostle was received with marked veneration, even as if he had been ‘an angel sent from heaven,’ and preached most successfully throughout all the region, making many converts, and planting numerous churches in it.

After leaving this province, the intention of the Apostle was to have continued his progress throughout the other parts of Asia; but, by a special revelation, he was forbidden to preach the gospel longer there; that is, in proconsular Asia, including Ionia, Æolia, and Lydia. He accordingly directed his course westward to Mysia, a small province of Asia Minor. It was inhabited by a base and contemptible race of people, but to them St Paul preached the gospel, and it is worthy of remark that, from the Apostle's day down to the present hour, some vestiges, at least, of a Christian church have constantly remained there.

From Mysia the apostle essayed to return eastward to Bithynia, part of Asia Minor, lying on the Euxine Sea, and had proceeded a considerable way on his journey, when, being warned by a second revelation, not to enter that province, he returned by, or *through* Mysia, to Troas, the capital city of a small country of the same name, situated to the west of Mysia, and on the borders of the Hellespont.

This city, which was built by Lysimachus, one of Alexander's captains, was peopled from the neighboring places, and originally called Alexandria, or Troas Alexandri, by the builder, in honor of his master; but it soon lost its more distinguished name, and, with the surrounding country, retained that of Troas mere-

ly. Its site was only about four miles distant from that of the famous Troy, and in the Apostle's day it was a noted sea-port, where travellers from the upper parts of Asia usually embarked for Europe. It was at this place that St Paul was joined by the Evangelist Luke, who from henceforth became his nearly inseparable companion. It does not, however, appear that he preached at Troas at this period ; but, while remaining there, apparently in a state of uncertainty as to his future movements, he beheld in the night-time a vision, which at once determined him as to the course he should pursue. A man, habited as a Macedonian, stood before him, and besought him to pass into Macedonia to their assistance. Paul immediately related the import of the vision to Luke, Silas, and Timothy, who, with one accord, regarding it as a direction from heaven, willingly obeyed the requisition, and setting out from Troas, came with a fair wind directly to Samothracia. St Paul, however, did not even land on the island ; but, passing by, landed at Neapolis.

Thus, after having first preached at Damascus, then at Jerusalem, throughout all the coasts of Judæa, in Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lydia, Pisidia, Phrygia, and other countries of Lesser Asia ; and, in his last journey from Antioch alone, having gone over nearly nine hundred miles in distance, the Apostle at last, by the

particular revelation of God, appeared among the Greek nations, to whom it was ordained that the gospel of peace should also be made known.

At Neapolis, Paul and his companions made no stay. They do not even appear to have preached there. They next proceeded to Philippi. It lay about fifteen miles distant from Neapolis, and was the chief city of that part of Macedonia, a Roman colony, and the first place belonging to the Romans at which Paul was ordained to preach. It is to be observed, however, that although it was *a city of the Romans*, the inhabitants of it did not belong exclusively to that illustrious nation. There were many Jews in the city, and an extensive synagogue was erected within its walls, as well as a proseuche or oratory, to which we shall subsequently have occasion more minutely to advert.

The mission of the Apostle to the Romans, a nation detested by the Jews, was attended with this remarkable occurrence, that the Apostle was not only hastened thither from Asia and Bithynia, but even directed in his way by a special and distinct revelation. The ministry so commenced could scarcely be deemed one of an ordinary or common nature, and accordingly many of the occurrences of it well support the character thus acquired.

QUESTIONS.

By whom were the churches in Cilicia probably established ?

Who was Timothy, and of what place a native ?

Why did St Paul require Timothy to be circumcised, but refuse this rite to Titus ?

What prevented St Paul, when leaving Galatia, from preaching in the neighboring cities of Asia ?

What is said of Troas ?

Who joined St Paul at that place ?

What determined St Paul to go to Macedonia ?

In what places had the Apostle preached before he was divinely sent to the Greek nations ?

To what place did Paul and his companions proceed from Neapolis ?

Who were the inhabitants of Philippi ?

CHAPTER VIII.

PHILIPPI.

HAVING arrived at Philippi, the apostle and his companions remained there for several days, poorly accommodated, and lodging in one of the meanest and least frequented parts of the city, till the Sabbath following their arrival, when they retired to a place by the river side, used for the purpose of bathing for the purifications required by the Mosaic law.

At this place, the *Proseuche* or Oratory, I have mentioned, was erected. These *Proseuchæ* were, if I may use the expression, a kind of Chapels of Ease to the Synagogues. They were built, in heathen countries at least, principally in the fields, and in sequestered places; they were uncovered, and without shelter, save that afforded by the surrounding trees, and used chiefly for prayer, and the exercise of private devotion. In Judæa they were numerous, and in the time of Tiberius several of them were allowed to be

erected, even in the immediate vicinity of Rome. At the one in question, on the occasion of the Apostle's visit, a considerable number of women were collected together for the purpose of prayer. Among these Paul and his companions sat down, and when their worship was concluded, the Apostle rose and preached the gospel to them.

This being the first time the glad tidings were preached in our quarter of the globe, they were listened to with attention by the hearers, especially by one Lydia, a seller of purple cloth, (then held in great estimation among the Romans,) and a woman of no small wealth and consideration in the city. She was not, it is true, a native of Philippi, nor was she a Roman. She was a Gentile proselyte from Thyatira, a city of some importance in Lesser Asia, and had taken up her residence at Philippi, for the purpose of pursuing a lucrative branch of commerce, by which she had already amassed considerable wealth. The deceitfulness of riches, however, had not shut her heart against the truths preached by the Apostle ; — these she believed, and, enlightened by the influence of the Holy Spirit, became a convert to Christianity, embraced its faith, and straightway was baptized by Paul.

From small beginnings great events sometimes follow. Lydia was the first person converted at Philippi, but almost immediately afterwards her whole household were likewise con-

verted and baptized ; and, ere many years had elapsed, a numerous and increasing church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, of which this was the foundation, was established at Philippi.

After her conversion, Lydia, filled with a spirit of charity, and compassionating the situation in which the Apostle and his companions were placed, invited them to leave their lowly abode, and take up their residence in her mansion. The Apostle at first refused this invitation ; but when earnestly pressed upon him, and his compliance entreated as an evidence that he considered her ‘to be faithful to the Lord,’ he consented, and with his companions took up his abode in Lydia’s house.

Retiring, according to their usual custom, to the place of prayer, the Apostle and his companions were one day followed by a Pythoness, or damsel possessed by a spirit of divination. The occupation of this woman, was, to utter ambiguous predictions in the name of the priestesses of the Pythian Apollo, — to point out the authors of concealed mischiefs, — discover stolen goods, — and, in short, perform the various feats of an experienced fortune-teller of the present day. As a sorceress, she was held in high estimation, and by the exercise of her talents, brought her masters great pain.

This woman, following the Apostle and his companions through the most public parts of the

city, ceased not to call aloud, 'These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation.' Day after day this was continued; but the Apostle knew that the doctrines he taught had no occasion to be supported by the testimony of an evil spirit; and, therefore, in presence of the assembled multitude, he evinced the truth of his mission, and the superiority of *his* cause, by commanding, in his master's name, that spirit to depart. Immediately, when thus adjured, the spirit came out of the damsel; she was at once restored to the use of her senses, probably converted to Christianity; and it became apparent to all around, that her occupation was gone, and that no more divinations, no more prophecies would be uttered by her.

Some have maintained that the conduct of the damsel was directed by her masters, who feared the influence of Paul and his companions, and dreaded that the spirit of Christianity, occasioned by his preaching, would prove ruinous to their trade. There does not appear to be any ground upon which such an assertion can be maintained. On the contrary, there cannot exist a doubt that the damsel was the object of a real satanical operation. If there had been any concerted plan betwixt her masters and her, it could not thus have been detected by the Apostle; nor would the damsel, if her imposition

had been merely assumed, have regained her senses at Paul's command, and allowed her fictitious spirit so readily to depart.

The disappointment of her masters is another conclusive evidence against any juggle having been concerted betwixt the parties. For, beholding all expectations of gain from that iniquitous source at an end, they immediately adopted a course which they might have done, with regard to the Apostle and his companions, on their first appearance. They laid violent hands upon Paul and Silas, and, unmindful of the multitudes by whom they were surrounded, dragged them, in the first instance, to the market-place, before the inferior judges, and then before the prætors or chief magistrates, where they accused them of publicly teaching the observation of customs which it was not lawful for Romans to receive.

This accusation was founded upon an old law of the Romans, forbidding them to worship either new or strange gods; but, as yet there had not been any law passed, to prohibit the Christians from exercising their own religion. It might, therefore, have been supposed that the groundless nature of the accusation would have at once appeared; or at least that, upon a fair hearing, Paul and Silas would have been acquitted. But no;—they were not even put upon their trial. Their guilt was assumed; and

the magistrates, following the custom observed with regard to *convicted* criminals, commanded their garments to be torn, or rent off, and the lictors to beat their backs and shoulders with rods, and then to cast them into prison, with a particular charge given to the jailer to keep them safely.

The jailer, into whose hands Paul and Silas were delivered, appears to have been a servant worthy of his masters, and a fit instrument of cruelty and oppression. Persons, in his situation, formerly possessed the discretionary power of treating the prisoners committed to their charge in whatever manner they pleased.

Exercising the power which he thus possessed, and probably urged by the special charge he had received, the jailer at Philippi forthwith thrust Paul and Silas into the *inner prison*, and made their feet fast in the stocks. The simplicity with which this event is narrated in the sacred writings, can convey no idea of the situation in which the Apostle and his companion were placed. The common jail or prison was a place of confinement for the worst and most abandoned criminals. In the centre of it was the *inner prison*, which was neither more nor less than a pit or dungeon, or, as the word has sometimes been rendered, a *cistern*, filled with deep *mud* or *mire*; and the *stocks*, in use among the Romans, were heavy pieces of wood, so

constructed, as not only to press with much weight upon the prisoner's limbs, but to prevent him placing them in a natural position, so that torture was added to the cruelty of his situation.

Thus Paul and Silas, their limbs loaded with the weight placed upon them, and kept in a painful and extended position, were laid upon their backs amidst the mud of a pestilent and noisome dungeon, their recent wounds festering and undrest, without bread to satisfy the cravings of hunger, or water to assuage their thirst, and deprived altogether of the blessed light of day.

But Paul and Silas uttered no complaint ; with hearts full of confidence towards God, they disregarded their painful sufferings, and sang praises aloud unto Him, till, instead of the profane language usually heard in such places, these blessed sounds fell upon the ears of their astonished fellow-prisoners.

To the still, small sound of these praises, however, a voice of most fearful testimony was added. A furious earthquake arose, which spread terror over the whole city ; but, in a more especial manner, was felt in the prison, the very foundation of which was shaken to its lowest stone, its doors burst open, and the prisoners' chains shook from their galled and fettered limbs.

The noise and confusion created by so sudden and unlooked-for an occurrence awoke the jailer

from his sleep, and he, beholding the doors of his prison-house standing open, naturally concluded that the prisoners had escaped; and, fearing the punishment of such negligence, a cruel and ignominious death, sought, after the manner of the Greeks and Romans, when desiring to escape from any misery they dreaded, to flee from that punishment by committing the crime of suicide. But Paul, aware of his design, immediately called aloud to him to do himself no harm, and assured him that all the prisoners were still there. A most striking scene now ensued. — The jailer, scarcely crediting his senses, commanded a light to be brought, and ran towards Paul and Silas, of whose preaching he had undoubtedly heard before, and fell down at their feet, and in very agony of spirit enquired earnestly of them, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ This all-important question Paul at once answered by pointing out the way of salvation to him. ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ This affords another remarkable instance of the gentle and forgiving spirit that dwelt in the Apostle’s breast. Even in the hour of persecution and cruelty — at the very time when he was suffering severe bodily pain from the infliction of an undeserved punishment, the instrument of which unexpectedly stood before him, in a humiliated situation, he not only extended his mercy and forgiveness

to him, but conferred upon him the greatest blessing which he had in his power to bestow ; he — baptized him and his straightway, and received them into the bosom of the Church of Christ.

The jailer, although previously a great and notorious sinner, now became meek and humble as a little child. He freed Paul and Silas from the stocks ; he took them from the inner prison, and carried them to his own dwelling, where he washed and dressed their wounds, and set meat and drink before them, rejoicing in his heart, and firmly believing in that God who had extended mercy and forgiveness even unto such as him.

On the following morning the magistrates, who, probably, had either heard of the wonderful events of the preceding night, or had become conscious of having far exceeded the powers vested in them, sent their lictors to the prison with an order to the jailer to let Paul and Silas go. This order being communicated to them, Paul immediately pleaded his privilege of a Roman citizen, which, perhaps, he had only been withheld from doing sooner, by seeing how useless such a plea would have been in the then excited state of the minds of the people. He also stated that he and Silas had been beaten openly and uncondemned, and thrust into prison without a cause ; and he therefore refused to depart

privately, but insisted that the magistrates themselves should come and fetch them out *publicly*, — even as publicly as they had thrust them in.

There was no inconsistency in the Apostle's conduct in this respect. Had he gone privately forth as the magistrates wished him, his doing so would have been tantamount to an acknowledgment of the justice of his sentence, and would have brought discredit upon the great cause of which he was so zealous and able an advocate ; whereas, his being publicly brought forth and liberated, by those very magistrates by whom he had been condemned, was a direct acknowledgment, on their part, of the injustice they had committed in imprisoning an innocent man without a cause.

Accordingly, the Apostle's answer having been delivered to the magistrates, they were afraid when they heard that the objects of their cruel treatment were Romans. They knew that their conduct had subjected them to the danger of very heavy penalties, if not to the risk of capital punishment ; for any such insult to the person of a Roman citizen, was regarded as an insult offered to the majesty of the people. In the exercise of their tardy reparation, therefore, they came to the jail and publicly brought Paul and Silas forth, and earnestly besought them to depart from Philippi. The Apostle, accordingly, quietly returned to the house of Lydia, where,

having once more met his brethren, he spoke the words of comfort to them, bade them farewell, and departed on his journey to Thessalonica.

I cannot conclude this chapter without observing that the Apostle's conduct on this occasion exhibits much of the true spirit of Christian meekness and humility. There is no doubt that if he had demanded reparation from the magistrates, he would readily have received whatever he had asked. But he sought no reparation ; — he did not even upbraid these unjust judges. Having justified his master's cause in the eyes of men, he had no thought of self, but, with Silas, departed on his way, rejoicing that he had been thought worthy to suffer persecution for his Redeemer's sake.

QUESTIONS.

In what manner, and for what use, were the oratories in use among the Jews constructed?

Who was the first convert to Christianity in all Europe?

What incident happened to the Apostle, which finally resulted in his imprisonment?

Describe his situation in the 'inner prison.'

What occurred immediately after Paul and Silas had sung a hymn?

What effect had this occurrence on the jailer?

What message did the magistrates send to the jailer the next morning?

What answer did St Paul return, and what effect did it produce?

CHAPTER IX.

THESSALONICA — BEREÄ.

ON his way to Thessalonica, the Apostle passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia. Both of these cities being rather out of the direct rout from Philippi to Thessalonica, it is probable that he proceeded in this direction with the hope of establishing churches and propagating the gospel in them. They were places of sufficient importance to render this object desirable. Amphipolis was built about five hundred years before the Christian era. It was the capital of the first division of Macedonia, situated on the confines of Thrace, close to the banks of the river Strymon, and contained about ten thousand inhabitants. Apollonia was also a city of Macedonia, betwixt Amphipolis and Thessalonica, and, although not of so much consequence as the former in any point of view, had yet sufficient importance to attract the Apostle's attention.

It would appear, however, that the Apostle did not stay any length of time in these cities. There were no synagogues in them, and we do not read of any converts having been made, or Christian churches planted, at Amphipolis or Apollonia.

Proceeding on his journey, Paul next arrived at Thessalonica, which, both from the length of time he resided there, and the eminent success attending his preaching, deserves more particular notice.

In ancient days, this splendid city was called Halis, and Thermæ, but Philip, the father of Alexander, subsequently named it Thessalonica, in commemoration of a great victory obtained over the Thessalonians. Even now it is a place of considerable importance, being upwards of five miles in circumference, and containing about sixty thousand inhabitants. The traces, too, of the Apostle's visit yet remain, in so far as about thirty churches, belonging to the Christians of the Greek church, still rear their heads in the midst of about fifty Jewish synagogues, and an equal number of Mahometan mosques or temples. This, however, is but the picture of it in its degenerate days. In the Apostle's time, it was the capital of all the countries comprehended in the Roman province of Macedonia, the residence of the pro-consul and quæstor, the seat of government, and a place

much resorted to by strangers. Its situation at the bottom of the Thermaic Gulf, admirably adapted it for commerce, and consequently the trade carried on by its inhabitants was most extensive. A great number of Jews, too, resided in it, and there was at least one, if not more, synagogues in the city.

On his arrival, he entered into the dwelling of one Jason, a Jew, and a kinsman of his own, and with him remained many days. During the week, he continued to teach in private till the first Sabbath after his arrival, when he entered into the synagogue, and preached to the Jews, proving from the scriptures, in the first place, that it behoved the Messiah to suffer death, and be raised again from the dead; and, in the second place, that Christ whom he preached was no other than the Messiah foretold in their own scriptures.

This course of preaching, we are told, he continued in the synagogue, not *daily*, as in other places, but for the *two succeeding Sabbaths*. We know, however, that the Apostle, while at Thessalonica, wrought at his occupation of a tent-maker for his own maintenance. The fact of his being thus employed, I think may reasonably account for his preaching only on the Sabbath days, instead of also teaching on other days, as he had been in the habit of doing. Be that as it may, the circumstance of St Paul's still

entering into the synagogues clearly evinces, that although now regularly constituted the Apostle to the Gentiles, he was not thereby debarred from preaching to the Jews. On the contrary, to these he first turned, but, in the present instance, as in many others, with little success indeed.

It is no doubt true, that at Thessalonica some of the Jews were converted and believed. But so few were their numbers, that after the first three Sabbaths Paul appears to have confined his ministry almost entirely to the Gentiles. Of the proselytes, or *devout Greeks*, as they are called in Scripture, he converted a great multitude, and many also of the chief women of the city.

This great success having attended his preaching to the proselytes at Thessalonica, the indefatigable Apostle was next induced to turn to the idolatrous Gentiles, and amongst them also his exertions were crowned with wonderful prosperity. Many of that despised people, beholding the miracles he did, hardened not their hearts as the Jews had done, but, grasping at the tidings of salvation held out to them, believed. These, associating with the converted proselytes, soon formed a considerable church at Thessalonica, to superintend which, the Apostle, without delay, appointed deacons, rulers, and other officers.

The consequences of this charitable and praiseworthy conduct soon appeared. The Jews at Thessalonica, exhibiting the same spirit of inveterate hostility as their brethren in other parts had done, and filled with envy and indignation, because the tidings they had despised, the benefits they had refused, the blessings they had cast away, were preached and offered to idolaters, proceeded to inflame the minds of their townsmen, by propagating false accounts of the Apostle's mission, and finally succeeded in raising a tremendous tumult in the city. The means they took to accomplish this end could scarcely fail. In every large town, particularly of a mercantile description, there are hosts of idle and dissolute characters to be found lingering about the market, and other places of public resort. To these the Jews applied, and by mingled persuasions and promises, easily induced them, knowing little, and caring less about the matter, to adopt their views. The train thus ignited, and the minds of a promiscuous rabble excited, it was an easy matter for the designing agitators to turn the fury of the mob in any direction they chose. The tumult and uproar having spread to an enormous extent, they accordingly seized the proper moment, and directed the popular attention to the house of Jason, where they knew the Apostle lodged, in the hope, doubtless, of laying violent hands

upon him, and inducing the people at once to sacrifice him in their blind and misguided zeal.

In this hope they were disappointed. They did not find the Apostle, but they found his hospitable landlord, and him, along with others of the brethren, then assembled in his house, they dragged before the rulers or inferior magistrates of the city. There an extraordinary scene took place. Not long before a decree had been passed at Rome, that no one within the bounds of the empire should assume the title of king without permission of the emperor. Taking advantage of this decree, the Jews, disappointed in their main object, accused Jason of having received and harbored those whom they represented as having turned the world upside down, and as having asserted, boldly and in public, that there was another king besides Cæsar.

Jason, from his situation in life, was probably well known to the rulers, who had no disposition, if they could avoid it, to act against him; yet, on the other hand, if they altogether disregarded so serious a charge, they feared the Emperor's displeasure. In this dilemma they knew not how to act; but, upon farther investigation, finding that the king of whom the Apostle spoke, was not an earthly king, nor the claimant of any temporal dominion, they laughed the charge to scorn, and merely taking security from Jason and his friends, that they would con-

tinue good subjects to Cæsar, as they had heretofore been, they let them go.

In the meantime the innocent cause of all this tumult had been concealed from the fury of the mob. But notwithstanding the amicable conduct of the rulers, his friends, fearing that another tumult might be raised, in which he might not make so remarkable an escape, took the necessary measures to convey him and Silas out of the city by night, and to forward them on their way to Berea.

Thus, after a residence of some months at Thessalonica, during which time he had made innumerable converts, formed them into a regular church, and appointed rulers and other officers over them, in the exercise of the ministry, the persecuted Apostle was once more, for his own safety, compelled to flee away by night.

Berea, at which he next arrived, was another great and populous city of Macedonia, situated near the Thermaic gulf, about forty miles to the west of Thessalonica. He immediately after his arrival, entered into the synagogue, and preached and taught there publicly, even as he had done at Thessalonica. The materials he had to work upon, however, were of a very different nature. The Jews at Berea were of a noble and candid disposition. With minds open to conviction, they heard the words of the Apostle, and, totally unbiassed by the prejudices of

education or otherways, they searched the scriptures for themselves, that, of their own conviction, they might be persuaded of the truth.

The result of this honorable and upright conduct soon became apparent. Many of the Jews at Berea, both of the more rich and noble, as well as of the poorer class, believed. These last were in a very remarkable way made useful in propagating the gospel. Numbers of them were slaves to the wealthy Grecian ladies of the place, whom they had opportunities, in numerous instances, of instructing in the knowledge of the true God. Thus instructed, they soon came to attend the synagogue, for the purpose of hearing the scriptures read, and there, having heard the Apostle preach, they were, by his arguments, speedily converted to Christianity. By the influence they possessed over their husbands, and others of their families, they afterwards became the instruments of inducing them also to hear the gospel, and be converted.

But, during the period of his continuance there, the mind of the Apostle was often troubled by serious apprehensions of what the consequences of his sudden flight from Thessalonica might be. He finally determined to set all danger at defiance, and to return to Thessalonica. He was upon the point of carrying this determination into effect, when he was prevented, by

the arrival at Berea, of those very enemies whom he would so boldly and unhesitatingly have faced. They had heard of his flight thither ; the eminent success of his preaching had reached their ears, and the tidings were as gall and wormwood to their polluted souls. They hastened to follow him, and, arriving at the city, lost no time in stirring up the populace against the Apostle and his brethren.

The consequence of this continued persecution soon became apparent, and the brethren were obliged to send Paul from Berea, even as they had sent him from Thessalonica. They gave him in charge to several of their number, and these, using a very excusable stratagem to deceive the Jews, made with him for the sea, and embarked, as if intending to return to Asia ; but, instead of that, by a slight deviation in their course, they turned westward, and soon after reached Athens, then one of the most splendid and magnificent cities of the world.

In his flight, however, the Apostle was not unmindful of the interests and welfare of those he had left behind. Silas and Timothy, being less obnoxious to the Jews, remained at Berea to regulate the affairs of the church, which the sudden departure of Paul himself had prevented him from doing ; and they did not again join him till after the return of those who had accompa-

nied him to Athens, bearing his request that they would, as speedily as possible, meet him there.

Thus, in the present, as in other instances, the continued persecution of the Jews, so far from aiding the object they had in view, only tended still more extensively to propagate the knowledge of that christianity which now appeared to run like wildfire in the traces of the Apostle's steps.

QUESTIONS.

What is said of Amphipolis and Apollonia ?

To what city did the Apostle next proceed ?

What is said of Thessalonica ?

With whom did St Paul reside ?

How did he pass his time here ?

For how long a term did he preach to the Jews ?

To whom afterwards did he confine his ministry ?

What success attended his exertions ?

How was he treated by the unbelieving Jews ?

How was Jason treated by them when they found that Paul was not in his house ?

To what place did the Apostle next flee ?

How was Berea situated ?

What is said of the inhabitants of Berea ?

What was the result of their ingenuous conduct ?

What caused St Paul to fly from Berea ?

To what city did he go ?

What two disciples remained at Berea ?

CHAPTER X.

ATHENS.

ATHENS, at which the Apostle next arrived, was situated in a beautiful plain of Attica, the fairest part of Greece—on the gulf of the *Ægean* sea, which runs up to the *Morea*. It lay about two hundred and fifty miles to the south of *Berea*, and thirty-five miles to the east of *Corinth*. At the period of the Apostle's visit it maintained its place as one of the most renowned and famous cities in the world; although it unquestionably had then somewhat retrograded from its pristine splendor, in consequence of the seat of government having been fixed at *Corinth*, after the conquest of Greece had been completed by the Romans.

It was still, however, so celebrated as being the seat of science, philosophy, and the arts, and, according to *Cicero*, the fountain from whence civility, learning, religion and the laws flowed to all other nations, that it deservedly obtained the name of the University of the Roman Empire and the world. It was flocked to from all quar-

ters for the purpose of acquiring knowledge in every branch of literature, and a residence there was considered essential to completing the education of the man of wisdom and of manners.

The sects of the philosophers inhabiting the city were numerous ; but the only two with which the Apostle came immediately in contact, were those of the Epicureans and the Stoics. The former of these were followers of Epicurus, who flourished about the year of the world 3700. They admitted the existence of the gods, but they did not admit that they had any concern or rule in the government of the world. They denied the resurrection, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of angels. Their chief happiness consisted in the constant pursuit of trifling pleasures, although there were not wanting those among them who maintained that happiness principally consisted in the tranquillity of mind arising from the exercise of moral virtues. The greater number, however, regarded the precepts of their founder as applying to the enjoyment of sensual pleasures merely. The Stoics, on the other hand, following the doctrines of their founder Zeno, were fatalists in the strongest sense of the word. They acknowledged the existence of deities, but they maintained that they were bound by rules which could not be departed from nor altered. They affected utterly to extinguish their

own feelings and passions, and made much show of the stiffness, austerity, and insensibility of their manners. They were extravagantly proud and obstinate, and a virtuous man — according to their ideas of virtue — was, in many instances, deemed to be superior even to their gods. In their principles the two sects were much opposed to each other; but in their dislike, their abhorrence of the Christian religion, they were agreed.

Notwithstanding the many advantages the inhabitants of this splendid city enjoyed — notwithstanding their eloquence, their learning, their talents, their knowledge of the arts and sciences, it remains as matter of deep regret that they were sunk in the grossest superstition and idolatry. Within the limits of the city there were more idols than in all the remainder of Greece. They even erected altars to the nameless and unknown gods.

It was also a remarkable feature in the character of the Athenians, and one which deserves to be attended to in illustrating some of the circumstances of the Apostle's visit to them, that they were so much the victims of an insatiable curiosity, that their whole time was taken up either in themselves communicating something new, or in the attempt to acquire similar information from their neighbors.

This slight sketch of the people among whom

the Apostle was now thrown, will enable us better to appreciate the motives which guided his conduct in some of his transactions with them. On his first arrival he does not appear to have made up his mind as to whether his preaching there was likely to be attended with effect. He had some idea of immediately passing over into Asia; but while he waited till Silas or Timothy should join him, he beheld the whole city so entirely given up to idolatry, that his spirit was moved within him, and, totally disregarding those splendid efforts of art and science by which he was surrounded, he turned to the work he had so much at heart, and, entering into the synagogue frequented by the Jews and proselytes, sought to convince them of the truth of the doctrines which he taught. This continued to be his daily occupation, for a length of time, not only in the synagogue, but also in the market-place, or forum, where the scholars of this celebrated city used to meet for the purposes of conversation and debate; and, it is worthy of remark, that in deference to the learning, talent and ability of those who were his hearers now, the Apostle did not pretend to *teach* them, as he had done others of a more ignorant and unlearned class, but as we are told, he '*disputed*' with them,—that is, he conversed on a footing of equality with those he met, and sought, by rational arguments, to

convince them of the truth of the Christian religion.

While thus engaged, he encountered several philosophers of the sects of the Epicureans and Stoics, who disputed his doctrines, scorned his arguments, reviled himself, and, when he preached Jesus and the resurrection, deemed that he was a setter forth of strange gods ; — Their desire of novelty was thus excited ; and that they might hear more of the matter, and have their ruling passion gratified, they laid hands upon the Apostle, and brought him to the court of Areopagus.

This court, or senate house, was situated upon Mars-hill, — in former times, almost in the centre of the city, although now entirely without its bounds. There the senate met, and in the open air heard and determined every cause. The wisdom and uprightness guiding the decisions of this court, which, before the conquest of Greece by the Romans, used to judge in all causes both of a civil and religious nature, were held in such esteem, that, even after the Roman proconsuls had been sent to rule in Greece, it was no uncommon thing for them to refer difficult causes to the judgment of the Areopagites. But, in the Apostle's day, their consequence and splendor had both dwindled away — their jurisdiction in civil matters was at an end, — and although they still pretended to judge of

those of a religious nature, and maintained that no strange worship could be introduced till it had first received their approbation, their celebrated court-house had in fact become little more than a point of meeting, or place of general rendezvous, for those who desired either to tell or hear of something new.

It appears abundantly obvious, therefore, that the Apostle was not brought before this judicature as an accused person, or criminal, to answer for any fault he had committed, but that the doctrines which he preached, might, if they met the approbation of the Areopagites, receive their sanction, and be admitted into the extensive code of their religious regulations.

Accordingly, on reaching the Areopagus, those around him immediately desired of the Apostle to know what the new doctrine whereof he spake was? Now, in the course of his perambulations through the city, the Apostle had beheld an altar with the inscription 'To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, to the strange and *unknown God*.' From this inscription some have supposed that the *unknown God* was the God of the Jews, and that to him the altar was erected.

There was a synagogue at Athens, and undoubtedly the inhabitants must have heard of the God who was worshipped there. But the Jews were very particular in concealing the name of

their God, not thinking it lawful to pronounce it upon ordinary or indifferent occasions. The Athenians, therefore, knew not the name of this God, but, in their religious zeal, that they might omit doing honor to none, especially to one whose worship was tolerated in their own city, they erected the altar to the unknown God.

Paul, therefore, assumed the God to whom the altar was erected to be the only true God, and pointed out that He whom they *ignorantly* worshipped, he openly declared unto them. He thus avoided any allusion to the first part of the inscription, and confining himself to the conclusion of it, maintained his argument upon the supposition that he only declared who that God was to whom their own altar had been erected.

In continuation, and in an equally skilful manner, he adapted his address to the character and state of all who heard him, — not even scorning, in a place so famed for polite learning, to illustrate his discourse by reference to classical writers and to their own poets. To his hearers, in general, as idolaters, he showed that the true God had no need of temples of clay to dwell in, nor to be worshipped with sacrifices and meats prepared by the hand of man ; — to the Epicureans, he addressed the argument that the same God governed the whole universe by a most wise and unerring providence ; — to the

Stoics, that his government was free and unconstrained ; — to those who made the lighter branches of literature their pursuit, he enforced the lessons he taught by reference to Aratus, the poet, who had lived about three hundred years before, and in one of whose works, the Apostle, who perhaps was inferior to none in mental acquirements and polite learning, well knew that the sentiments he expressed were to be found ; and, finally, *to all*, he again fervently and eloquently preached Jesus, and the resurrection. But, when he came to this part of his address, the light-minded and trifling philosophers, of the sect of the Epicureans, mocked both the Apostle and his speech ; while the graver and more steady followers of Zeno, and the Platonists, treating him with a degree of contempt and scorn, merely said, ‘ We will hear thee again of this matter.’

All who heard him, however, did not behave in this manner. Some believed and were converted, and, among others, the senator Dionysius, and Damaris, a woman of considerable rank and influence.

But, on the whole, the Apostle’s preaching was attended with little success at Athens. The minds of the philosophers of that celebrated city were too much occupied with their own frivolous pursuits to allow of leisure to attend to this all-important subject. Their constant

chase after something new in the things of time, prevented their receiving the knowledge of those which had to do with eternity. They had no room in their hearts for both ; they were proud, they were vain of their own attainments ; the humble, teachable disposition necessary to receiving a knowledge of the gospel lived not within their breasts, and the proud ones of Athens cast from them those truths which the ignorant but humble mind of many an idolatrous Gentile had so joyfully received.

QUESTIONS.

What is said of Athens ?

What was it in respect to science and philosophy ?

What were the two principal philosophical sects, that prevailed in the city ?

What were the peculiar views of the Epicureans ?

What doctrines were held by the Stoics ?

What was the moral character of the Athenians ?

What one peculiar trait of character did they possess distinguishing them from other people ?

To what conclusion did the Apostle come on surveying the city ?

To what place was he led that he might explain his religious views ?

How was his address received by the philosophic sects ?

Did he make any converts to Christianity in Athens ?

What prevented the philosophers from attending to the truths, which the Apostle preached ?

CHAPTER XI.

CORINTH.

ON leaving Athens, the Apostle next directed his steps to Corinth. This city, anciently called Epirus, is supposed to have been founded in the time of Solomon. The consul Mummius took, and reduced it to ashes, in revenge of a gross insult put by the inhabitants upon the Roman ambassadors.

About a century after it was rebuilt by Julius Cæsar, and peopled with a Roman colony. It then became the capital of Greece, and one of the fairest cities in the world. The inhabitants soon became enriched, and when the Apostle arrived at Corinth it had become more famed for its extent and population, and the philosophy, politeness, learning, and wealth of its inhabitants, than any other city in Greece.

While the arts and sciences, however, flourished in so fair a soil, they brought pride of heart in their train, and the exuberant riches

of the people produced many sorts of iniquity and vice.

Such was the situation of Corinth, both in a political and moral point of view, when Paul arrived there. He was not, however, at once cast into the midst of strangers, nor left without a friend, to experience that sense of loneliness which oppresses the heart of the weary traveller, when first arriving amidst the busy hum of a crowded city, in which no well-known or familiar face can meet his view. Aquila, a Jew of Pontus, in Asia, who had recently been driven from Italy, in consequence of the decree of Claudius, commanding the Jews to depart from Rome, had, with his wife Prisca or Priscilla, taken up his abode at Corinth. These two had formerly been converted to Christianity by Paul at Antioch, and having ever since continued steadfast in the faith, the Apostle recognized them with a glad heart, and immediately took up his residence in their house. It so happened that Aquila was a tent-maker, the same trade in which Paul had been instructed in his youth, and that he might not be burdensome to him, he joined him in this occupation, and once more wrought with his own hands for his support. This may probably have been, to a certain degree, a work of choice, but it unquestionably was also, at this period, a work of necessity on the Apostle's part, and accordingly he contin-

ued to exercise it regularly till the Sabbath following his arrival, when he adjourned to the synagogue, and there preached repentance to the Jews, and to the proselytes of the Gentile nation.

In this course the Apostle continued, although with but indifferent success, till he was joined by Silas and Timotheus, who came to him from Berea; the latter in the meantime having been to Thessalonica, to which he had been sent from Athens to comfort the disciples under the tribulation they endured after the departure of their zealous teacher.

Enlivened by their presence, and assisted in his labours by their co-operation, the Apostle became more active than ever in his endeavors to acquire converts. He continued to preach to the Jews that Jesus who had come was their expected Messiah; he exhorted and affectionately entreated them to receive the gospel; but they opposed, reviled, and insulted him. They would have none of his doctrine — they laughed him to scorn, and blasphemed the name and denied the divinity of his Lord and Master, till worn out and vexed with the insults thus heaped upon alike his cause and him, the Apostle, after the manner of the East, shook his raiment, thus symbolically renouncing all fellowship with them, and in the words of their own scriptures, made this memorable declaration — *‘Your blood be upon*

your own head — I am clean ; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.'

It is not, however, to be understood, that from this time the Apostle deserted the Jews for ever. His declaration was personal to the Jews at Corinth, and not meant to apply to the nation at large ; and, accordingly, we shall, at a future period, find him, with unabated affection towards that singular people, again preaching in their synagogues.

In the meantime, true to his word, he retired from the synagogue at Corinth, preaching no more there, but henceforth using the house of one Justus, a proselyte, who had been converted to Christianity, in which he preached to and instructed many of the Gentile nation. It was situated close to the synagogue, and undoubtedly chosen for the purpose of giving those of the recreant race who desired it an easy opportunity of listening to his instructions. It is true, that those of the Jews, who still sought to attend upon his ministry, were not numerous, but, such as they were, it would surely have been a piece of unheard-of cruelty to have abandoned them in their time of need ; and, at the very commencement of their christian career, to have left them as sheep who had no shepherd to protect them.

The success which attended the Apostle's endeavors, however, was much more eminent among the idolatrous inhabitants of Corinth. Many of

these, listening to the pure and simple doctrines of the Gospel, forsook their sins, and were baptized. But, notwithstanding this, a fearful dejection seems to have weighed upon the Apostle's mind, — an unaccountable depression to have borne him, as it were, to the dust. Certain it is, that for once departing from the usual firmness of his character, he would have fled the vicinity of a place where his endeavors, apparently, could be of little use. But it pleased his Master, by an immediate interposition, to prevent this desertion of his work. In the still watches of the night the Lord appeared to Paul in a vision, and said to him — ‘Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee ; and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee ; for *I have much people in this city,*’ or ‘there are yet many to be converted unto me.’

Thus strengthened and encouraged, the Apostle resumed his labors with renewed vigor, and finally remained at Corinth for the space of eighteen months, during which period he preached with much success, both in the city, and the surrounding country of the Peloponnesus, and succeeded in persuading many a dissolute and abandoned sinner to embrace the offers so freely and gratuitously held out to his acceptance.

A new source of doing good, also appears to have opened itself to the Apostle's mind about this

time. Hitherto his labors had been confined to preaching merely, but during his stay at Corinth he wrote his Epistles to the Thessalonians, which are now almost universally acknowledged to be the first productions of his pen remaining in existence. In the editions of the New Testament commonly in use, the postscript to these Epistles bears that they were written from Athens; but this is obviously an error; for, in the first place, they are written in the joint names of Paul, Sylvanus or Silas, and Timotheus. Now Silas was not at Athens, although he subsequently joined Paul at Corinth. In the second place, at the period when the first epistle was written, there was, as we read in the Epistle itself, a church established in Achaia; but there was no church there till Paul had left Athens, and gone to Corinth. Finally, the Apostle mentions, not only Timotheus' departure to Thessalonica, but also his return, which we know took place at *Corinth*; so that no reasonable doubt can possibly exist with regard to the time and place at which these epistles were written.

There appears also to be just as little room left for conjecture with regard to the reasons which induced the Apostle to adopt this means of communication with the disciples in Macedonia, instead of visiting them personally as heretofore. The tidings, which he received from Timothy, of the persecution raging at Thessa-

lonica, while the brethren stood firm against the united attacks of idolaters and Jews, made him extremely anxious to visit them once more, that they might be comforted by his presence, and strengthened by his example; but the importance of the work in which he was engaged at Corinth hindered this, and he determined, as the best substitute he could bestow, to write an epistle to them. Accordingly, the main design of the first of these epistles is to confirm and strengthen the disciples in their belief of the christian religion, to induce them to persevere in it to the end, whatever might be the afflictions and persecutions they should be called upon to endure, and finally, by affectionate exhortations, to instruct them in the various duties of a christian life.

The meaning, however, of the most distinct of writers may sometimes be mistaken; and isolated passages will occur in the best of essays, which call for explanation at an after period. When the Apostle's first Epistle was publicly read in the church at Thessalonica, some of the brethren, to whom it was addressed, drawing an erroneous inference from certain passages in it, themselves adopted the belief, and propagated it as from the authority of the Apostle, that the day of judgment was at hand. This erroneous doctrine was also zealously disseminated by the enemies of the infant church, who pretended that they had just arrived at Thessalonica, bear-

ing a confirmation of this mistaken notion from the Apostle himself. Great confusion and dismay was, in consequence, created in the church, and the brethren entirely neglected their worldly affairs, and disregarded the things of time as totally incompatible with salvation and eternity.

This state of matters being reported to the Apostle, he forthwith wrote his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, in which, while repeating his exhortations to steadfastness in the faith, he eloquently assures them that the day of judgment is at hand, and points out to their observation some of those signs which must infallibly precede the coming of the Son of man.

These Epistles having been despatched, Paul resumed his labors at Corinth with redoubled zeal ; but, as in almost every other place where he preached, the enmity of the Jews, after a certain time, began to show itself ; they conspired against him, and brought him before the judgment-seat of Gallio, the deputy or proconsul of Achaia.

But, in this instance, malevolence and persecution had not their sway. The man, before whom the Apostle was brought, was a judge of an upright and benevolent character, Marcus Annæus Novatus, or Gallio, brother to the famous heathen moralist Seneca.

It is scarcely possible to imagine a judge possessed of more distinguished attributes, and it

was fortunate for the Apostle that he, before whose judgment-seat he was arraigned, was such a man. No sooner had the malignant Jews pronounced their paltry accusation, ‘ *This fellow* persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law,’ than the upright judge saw it was a matter which might have been determined in their own synagogues, but with which he had nought to do. He did not therefore even call upon Paul to make his defence. He told the Jews, that if he had been brought there for a matter of wrong or wickedness, their accusation would have been heard; but so long as the dispute betwixt them related merely to a question of words and names, that is, of Paul’s preaching, and whether Jesus should be called the Messias, he had nothing to do with it, and accordingly commanded them to be driven from the judgment-seat.

The Greeks, we are told, then took Sosthenes, who had succeeded Crispus as ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. These Greeks are supposed by some to have been officers attached to the household of the governor, who beat Sosthenes, in driving him from the judgment-seat, according to the practice of beating those Jews who brought groundless or malicious accusations there.

After this disturbance, Paul remained a con-

siderable time unmolested at Corinth, and, no doubt, succeeded in establishing a considerable church within the walls of that celebrated city. But, at no distant period, it sunk into a wretched and degenerate condition: false teachers arose among the Corinthians; disorders and schism were the consequences; some of the disciples pretended to be followers of Paul — some of Peter — some of Apollos, an eminent and distinguished Jew of Alexandria — and some discarding all minor teachers, pretended to be followers of Jesus Christ alone.

Yet, notwithstanding this confusion, the church did not, as might have been expected, fall to pieces. It has maintained a place at Corinth to the present day, and one half of the inhabitants are still Christians, with an archbishop at their head. But Corinth is no longer what it was — it is now under the dominion of the Turks, a decayed and desolate place, containing, at the highest computation, no more than two thousand miserable inhabitants.

QUESTIONS.

To what place did the Apostle go on leaving Athens ?

What is said of the inhabitants of Corinth ?

Who was Aquila, and what is said of him ?

Who joined St Paul after he commenced his labors at Corinth ?

How was the Apostle treated by the Jews, and what was his course of conduct towards them ?

What was the Apostle's success among the idolatrous Gentiles ?

When he was under the influence of the deepest depression, what animated him to perseverance ?

How long did St Paul remain at Corinth ?

What reasons are there for believing that the Epistles to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth ?

What is the design of the first Epistle ?

In what respect was the meaning of the Apostle misapprehended ?

What was the object of the second Epistle ?

Before whom did the Jews bring the Apostle ?

How did he treat their complaint ?

Who were the Greeks, and who was Sosthenes, mentioned in connection with this incident ?

What is the present condition of Corinth ?

CHAPTER XII.

EPHESUS.

PRISCILLA and Aquila, being desirous of settling for a time at Ephesus, and the Apostle having determined to leave Corinth in order to be present at the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, they all embarked on board a ship bound for Cesarea, but which was to touch at Ephesus, in the province of Lydia, on its way ; Paul having first, as we are told, shorn his head at Cenchrea, the place of their embarkation, because ‘ he had a vow.’

There is little doubt that the vow which the Apostle had lain under was that of a Nazarite, which enjoined a separation from the world, peculiar abstinence, and a strict devotedness to the exercises of religion for a time. He who undertook it was not allowed to shave his head during the period of its continuance ; but at its conclusion, as a token that it had been accomplished, the head of the Nazarite was shaven,

and thus the distinguishing mark, by which he had been known, removed. It was incumbent upon him also to perform sacrifices and ablutions at the tabernacle and temple of Jerusalem, although it was permitted to those who had taken this vow, *without* the limits of Judea, to shave the head at its termination, wherever they might happen to be.

The Apostle, accordingly, at the termination of *his* vow, shaved his head at Cenchrea, and, embarking there, reached Ephesus in safety, after having performed a voyage of nearly two hundred and fifty miles.

In ancient days this city was the metropolis of proconsular Asia, and a place in which much trade was carried on. It is said to have been founded earlier than the days of David, and to have derived its name from an Amazonian lady who contributed greatly to its erection. Its situation, on the side of a gently sloping hill, by the banks of the river Cayster, with a far extended verdant plain stretching to the west, was beautiful. But, among the heathens, it was chiefly famed for its splendid temple of Diana. This magnificent structure, the building of which occupied upwards of two hundred years, was erected at the joint expense of the whole of Lesser Asia. It was of great length and breadth, and the roof was supported by one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, of which twenty-seven

were beautifully and curiously wrought, and the remaining one hundred formed of highly polished marble. Indeed, so exquisite was the workmanship bestowed upon it, and so inestimable its value, that, by the universal consent of all ages, a place among the few wonders of the world has been accorded to it.

As may be guessed, from the extent of this magnificent display in honor of a heathen goddess, the inhabitants of Ephesus were sunk in the grossest superstition and idolatry. No spark of religion, scarcely even of common sense, existed within their bosoms. They were given to luxury and effeminacy, which, as in the case of the Corinthians, brought many attendant evils in their train.

Lost and degraded, however, as the inhabitants were, the Apostle, during his short stay amongst them at this period, made a stronger impression than he had done upon the minds of many a more enlightened people, and they earnestly besought him to remain for a space with them. But he had another object in view, and, in pursuance of it, was constrained to bid these anxious listeners farewell. He felt himself under an obligation to keep the coming feast at Jerusalem; his duty calling him there, but his heart lingered at Ephesus, and he promised, if God were willing, that he would return to them again. Ere long he amply redeemed his promise.

The motive of Paul's anxiety to proceed so immediately to Jerusalem is not very distinctly known ; but when we remember the situation in which he was placed, we can scarcely doubt that it was to complete the redemption of his vow by offering the sacrifices and oblations required by the Mosaic law. He therefore rigidly complied with an observance which, in itself, bore not even the shadow of a sin, — thus affording another of those instances in which he became as a Jew, that by all means he might gain the Jews.

Some, it is true, have assigned a different reason for his journey to Jerusalem at so interesting a period. The feast of the passover was nigh at hand, when multitudes from all quarters of Judea would be congregated together within the walls of Jerusalem. The Apostle would then have an opportunity of widely disseminating the doctrines he so zealously taught.

By whatever motive, however, he may have been urged, the fact is certain, that, soon after his arrival, the Apostle again sailed from Ephesus to Cesarea, and at length safely disembarked at the latter place.

From Cesarea, without loss of time, he proceeded to Jerusalem, and, having kept the passover, offered his sacrifices, and performed his oblations, without tarrying, either to preach or teach, in a field where so many faithful minis-

ters stood around him, he immediately proceeded by land to Antioch in Syria.

At Antioch he remained for some time, teaching, comforting and strengthening in the faith the disciples of the church he had established there. He then passed through the remainder of Syria and Cilicia, and again visited all the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, exhorting the numerous disciples established in them, and receiving those contributions which they had formerly been required to furnish for the relief and assistance of their brethen in Judea.

After this long and fatiguing journey, Paul, keeping in mind his promise to the Ephesians, passed through the 'upper coasts,' or inland parts of Lesser Asia, and came again to Ephesus.

On arriving there a scene of a very interesting nature occurred. He found twelve disciples, to whom the knowledge of the gospel had been, to a certain extent, communicated by Aquila and Priscilla, who, during the Apostle's absence, had been privately exerting themselves to prepare the hearts of many to receive his lessons. Anxious to know the state of their minds, Paul, on his first interview with them, inquired if they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed—that is, with the respect to the gift of prophecy, which was the

meaning attached by the Jews to the expression used by the Apostle. To this question the disciples returned the answer, — We have not so much *as heard* whether there be *any* Holy Ghost.' But this answer must be regarded with a view to the light in which the Apostle's question was beheld. Upon receiving this answer, Paul very naturally enquired of them, 'Unto what, then, were ye baptized?' and they answered, 'Unto John's baptism.'

When the Apostle thus understood their ideas, and saw what was passing in their hearts, he explained the gospel doctrines more fully to them, and 'they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,' and Paul laid his hands upon them, and they received the gifts of prophecy and of tongues.

After this commencement of his labors at Ephesus, Paul turned once more toward the recusant and rebellious Jews. He entered into their synagogue, and for the space of three months, boldly and unweariedly preached the gospel to them. But the same stern and unrelenting spirit of opposition which he had met with elsewhere, filled the hearts of the Jews at Ephesus. When they heard that he maintained the justification of mankind through the gospel alone, without a strict observance of the law of Moses, they raised their voices against a doctrine so inconsistent with their prejudices, and

denounced evil upon the teacher, and unsparingly reviled the lessons he so earnestly sought to inculcate.

Vexed, but not irritated, by this conduct, the Apostle, having separated the disciples and his followers from these unbelievers, silently withdrew from the synagogue, and cast his eyes around him for another place where he might as openly and as publicly preach the doctrines of his Master. We accordingly find that Paul pitched upon the school of one Tyrannus to continue his lectures in; this Tyrannus was doubtless a Gentile convert, and a public professor of philosophy or rhetoric, of whom there were many at Ephesus. But one thing is certain — that, in the school of Tyrannus, Paul continued, with much success, *daily* to teach, and preach, and to exhort the multitudes who flocked to him, for no less a period than two complete years. Nor were his exertions confined to public teaching only. Day and night, with the most earnest solicitude, he visited the private dwellings of the people, making new converts to the faith, and strengthening in its pure principles those who had already been converted. Combining example with instruction too, he not only led a blameless life during all this time, but even with the world of employment he had upon his hands, labored for his own maintenance, that no asper-

sion might be cast upon the purity of his motives, nor the greatest enemy of the gospel have it in his power to say that he taught its precepts for the sake of worldly gain.

The consequences of this noble and persevering line of conduct were brilliant in the extreme. Ephesus was the resort of many strangers, some of whom flocked thither to pay reverence to their renowned and famous goddess, others to be instructed in the arts of sorcery and magic, for which the city stood in high repute — others to prefer their suits and solicitations to the Roman governor of the province — others for the sake of commerce, and not a few to learn more of those doctrines and miracles of which they had heard so much, and with their own ears to listen to the instructions the Apostle gave. An innumerable multitude of these way-faring people were thus converted to the Christian faith.

In testimony of his divine mission, Paul also wrought many wonders and special miracles at Ephesus. Not the least remarkable of these were wrought even without his immediate agency or presence. Handkerchiefs, an article of dress very common in the East, aprons and other parts of the garments of the sick, the diseased, and the possessed, were brought to, and, being merely touched by him, were carried back and applied to the bodies of the afflicted, who,

strong in the faith, from that moment were restored; the sick becoming well, the diseased healed, and from the possessed the evil spirit being compelled to flee away.

Beholding the wonderful works which were thus wrought in the name of Jesus, a number of vagabond or wandering Jews, who had no fixed place of residence, but went about from town to town exercising the trade of exorcism or sorcery, arriving at Ephesus, left off their usual form of incantation, 'in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' and adopted that of Paul. Among these were seven sons of Sceva, chief of one of the classes of the Jewish priests, who 'took upon them to *call over* them who had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, we adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

In adopting this line of conduct, these exorcists would undoubtedly have the prejudices of their own nation to contend with. The Jews had a great respect for cures performed in this manner, because they believed that the art of doing so was derived from Solomon.

The result of the experiment of the sons of Sceva, therefore, was narrowly watched. An immense multitude, both of Jews and proselytes, were present to behold it, and of these a great number were immediately converted, and bore testimony to the truth of the gospel, when they saw the evil spirit, instead of giving way,

as he would have done had Paul adjured him, instigate the demoniac to spring upon these false physicians, and, with unbounded fury and supernatural strength, strip them of their garments, and drive them naked and wounded from the house.

Others of the inhabitants beholding them in this condition, the report of the transaction spread like lightning through every quarter of the city, carrying into the minds of many who were devoted to the practice of sorcery and magic, so great a degree of terror, that they brought together their books, and burned them publicly in the market place. Surely this was an evidence of sincerity, for the value of these books was fifty thousand pieces of silver, or 1562*l*, 10*s*, of English currency, if counted in Attic drachms, and no less than 6250*l*, if reckoned in Jewish shekels; yet this large sum, in either view, was sacrificed, that no chance might exist of evil being farther disseminated by means of the reprobated volumes.

The extent of the terror, too, impressed upon the minds of these deceivers, may be estimated by the knowledge that it drew forth these books from the hidden recesses in which they had slumbered, in defiance of the risk the possessors ran of having their goods forfeited, and, if of low rank, of being beheaded; for such, at that period, was the Roman law.

QUESTIONS.

Who accompanied St Paul to Ephesus ?

What is meant when it is said that the Apostle 'had a vow ?'

What is said of Ephesus, its situation, and appearance ?

For what was Ephesus famous among the heathen ?

Describe the Temple of Diana.

What was the character of the Ephesians ?

Why was St Paul anxious to go to Jerusalem ?

What is said respecting the twelve disciples which St Paul found at Ephesus on his return from Jerusalem ?

Why did not St Paul continue to preach in the synagogue ?

What was his success while preaching in the school of Tyrannus ?

Why was Ephesus the resort of many strangers ?

What miracles did St Paul perform here in testimony of his divine mission ?

What resulted from the attempt of the vagabond Jews to perform a miracle ?

CHAPTER XIII.

EPHESUS.

THE Emperor Claudius, who had issued the edict compelling the Jews to depart from Rome, died about this time, and having been succeeded by Nero, who, in the commencement of his reign, was esteemed a generous and humane prince, Paul determined, in his own mind, after he had once more gone up to Jerusalem, to bend his steps to Rome, the capital of the world.

But before proceeding to Jerusalem, the Apostle intended to visit the churches he had planted in Macedonia and Achaia, on purpose to receive their contributions for the relief of the distressed brethren in Judea. In pursuance of this intention, he sent Timotheus and Erastus into Macedonia before him, that these churches might not be unprepared for his coming, and probably was on the point of following them, when an event occurred which detained him some time longer at Ephesus.

In the city there was a class of artisans who realized large sums of money by manufacturing silver shrines for Diana. These shrines consisted of miniature representations of the famous temple of the goddess, with folding doors, which, being opened, disclosed her image placed upon the altar. They were in great demand, not only among the more zealous idolaters of the place, but also among those strangers who made pilgrimages to it, for the sake of visiting the temple, and who were naturally anxious to carry away some relic or memorial of their journey. That they should pitch upon a representation of the temple is not extraordinary; but when we bear in mind that the image of the Ephesian Diana, enshrined within it, was not that of the huntress Diana, as usually habited, but one of a very abominable and disgusting appearance, we cannot give much credit either to the taste or morals of these devotees.

Among the craftsmen who manufactured such shrines there was one Demetrius, a person of considerable influence and credit in the trade. This man, foreseeing the speedy ruin that the introduction of the gospel would occasion to his traffic, and having already, in some degree, been sensible of its influence, called together his own workmen, and also his brethren in the trade, and others concerned in the manufacture of the shrines — a numerous body — whom he quickly

and successfully inflamed by an address, calculated to awaken every avaricious and self-interested principle of their minds. He pointed out to them that their wealth was acquired by the manufacture of these shrines and images ; but that Paul, perseveringly preaching to the people (many of whom he had already converted) that these were no gods which were made with hands, would ultimately not only ruin and annihilate their trade, but even bring into contempt the great temple and its celebrated goddess, whom the whole world worshipped.

By this means a great tumult was raised, and the assembled multitude ceased not to cry aloud, ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians!’ till the whole city was alarmed. A rush was then made towards the residence of Paul, but fortunately he was not to be found, otherwise, in the then excited state of the multitude, his career in all human probability would have been forever closed. Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, and intimate friends of the Apostle, were, however, seized by the mob, who, with one accord dragged them to the theatre, where the public games were then celebrating, intending, doubtless, to cast them, like condemned malefactors, to the wild beasts.

On hearing the perilous situation of his friends, the Apostle, with characteristic intrepidity, would have instantly followed them to the theatre, in

the hope of being able to effect their rescue. But the disciples who were with him, trembling for his safety, prevented his thus hopelessly exposing himself. Some of the chief men of Asia also, who were priests, and, in virtue of their office, presidents or rulers of the games and combats in the theatre, and who providentially entertained sentiments of friendship for the Apostle, learning his situation, sent to him, entreating that he would not venture farther, as even they could not protect him, or prevent the mob exposing him to a combat with the lions.

The Apostle accordingly retired; and, in the meantime, the crowd around his friends, like all other unruly mobs, got confused, some crying out one thing, and some another — the greater part of them not even knowing what had brought them there.

The general riot, however, was not by this means diminished, and a considerable degree of alarm began to pervade the breasts of others besides the Apostle and his friends. The Jews feared that the idolaters would next fall upon them. In this dilemma they thrust forward one Alexander, to be questioned and examined by the multitude. Who this Alexander was, and by what motives he was actuated, appears to be matter of doubt. The multitude dragged him forward, but when they perceived he was a Jew, and consequently an enemy to their idolatry,

they would not listen to a word he had to say, but recommenced their fearful yells, shouting aloud, for the space of nearly two hours, ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians!’

At this juncture the town clerk, or proconsul’s secretary, a person of great influence with the people, himself a ruler of the games, and to whom the direction of the affairs of the city was committed, came forward, and by an address, distinguished for its calmness, temperance and ingenuity, allayed the storm, and quelled the riot. He particularly impressed upon the people the danger in which they stood of being called to account by the Romans for raising so fearful a tumult without any cause, and thus succeeded in at last dismissing them, and freeing Gaius and Aristarchus from the perilous situation in which they had remained for so many hours.

Soon after this tumult Paul called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of Ephesus. He then, according to the intention he had formed, proceeded towards Macedonia; but before accompanying him thither, we must revert to one or two circumstances which occurred during his stay at Ephesus, the mention of which, in order to pursue the narrative unbroken, has hitherto been purposely omitted.

From this celebrated city St Paul wrote his Epistle to the Galatians, and his First Epistle to

the Corinthians ; so that, with indefatigable zeal, he here continued that custom which he had already commenced, of exhorting and instructing the distant churches by letter, while his personal presence and exertions were demanded in converting others elsewhere.

The object of the first of these epistles is to put the Galatians, to whom it was addressed, upon their guard against those false teachers and seducers who had appeared amongst them soon after the reception of the gospel. These reviled the Apostle's character, and persuaded the Galatians to submit to the rite of circumcision, and to bring themselves under the Mosaic law. St Paul, therefore, in the first place, to give due weight to his epistle, very properly vindicates his own character as an Apostle, showing that he was in no respect inferior to Peter, who generally preached to the Jews and observed the ceremonial law. He then shows the unprofitable nature of such observances — that justification is through faith alone, and, after firmly but affectionately exhorting them to persevere in the course they had begun, concludes with many excellent precepts for the regulation of their conduct in maintaining the purity of a Christian life.

In the Greek editions of the New Testament, and in our translation, the postscript to this Epistle bears that it was written from Rome.

But there does not appear to be any authority for this assumption, and the epistle itself possesses intrinsic evidence of having been written at a much earlier period.

With regard again to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the postscript states that it was written from Philippi; but this is obviously an error, for in the epistle itself Paul writes, 'I will remain at *Ephesus* till Pentecost;' and, towards the conclusion of it, he sends to the Corinthians, the salutation of the churches, *not* of Macedonia, *but of Asia*, of which Ephesus was the capital. Throughout its whole extent the love and zeal of the Apostle are manifested in a remarkable degree; and, in many passages, there are beautiful allusions to the Isthmian games, which were celebrated in the immediate neighborhood of Corinth.

The more immediate occasion of this epistle being indited, was the arrival at Ephesus of some Corinthian disciples of the household of Chloe, with the account of a great division which had taken place in the church established there, in consequence of erroneous doctrines propagated by false teachers from Judea. On learning this state of matters, the Apostle, being unable to leave Ephesus at the time, and yet feeling much anxiety for the welfare of the church at Corinth, sent Erastus and Timothy on a mission thither, with instructions to inves-

tigate fully the cause and nature of these dissensions, and to encourage the steadfast members of the church in their adherence to the gospel.

In the meantime the disciples at Corinth had sent three of their number, Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaius, to Paul, in order to obtain his decision on the disputes by which their church was agitated. They arrived at Ephesus soon after the departure of Erastus and Timothy, bringing with them a letter containing a full account of the dissensions, abuses, and schisms which had crept in amongst them. In answer to this letter, the Apostle wrote the First Epistle, now extant, to the Corinthian church, and in it he endeavors, in the first place, to heal the dissensions and correct the disorders by which it was agitated, and then reproves the disciples for some gross and sinful abuses in which they had indulged; warns them against a covetous and litigious temper; lays down many rules for their conduct with regard to the social relations of life, and to enforce that purity in thought, word and deed, to which, as Christians, they were bound; proves the certainty of the resurrection, and ably refutes the doctrines of those false teachers, probably of the sect of the Sadducees, who denied its truth, and concludes by promising shortly to visit them in person. This epistle he sent by Titus, who returned to Corinth with Stephanus and his brethren.

Such are the transactions which took place at Ephesus — the scene at once of more gross idolatry, and of more splendid success in the preaching of the gospel, than any other city of the time. A numerous and flourishing church was established within its walls; but the sixth century beheld its decay, and at last saw it finally crushed beneath the overwhelming power of the Mahomedans. Its glory has departed, and Ephesus is now levelled with the dust. Scarcely one stone of it remains upon another; the site of the magnificent temple of Diana is unknown; and, with the exception of a few wretched and dependant Greek peasants, inhabiting some miserable huts at Aiasaluch, about half a mile distant, not a living being breathes or moves around its walls. Its candlestick has, indeed, in the words of Holy Writ, been removed out of its place.

QUESTIONS.

What are we to understand by the shrines of Diana manufactured by Demetrius and others ?

Describe the riot excited by Demetrius.

Who quelled the riot ?

To whom did St Paul commit the oversight of the church at Ephesus ?

What was the object of the Apostle in writing the Epistle to the Galatians, and what reason is there for concluding that it was written from Ephesus ?

What reason is there for concluding that the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus ?

What occasioned this Epistle ?

What is the present condition of Ephesus ?

CHAPTER XIV.

TROAS — MACEDONIA — CORINTH — ASSOS — MIT-
YLENE — SAMOIS — MILETUS, &c.

ST PAUL was now on the point of leaving Ephesus, but before doing so he called together the disciples and bade them an affectionate farewell. He then, early in the summer of the year 58, proceeded northward to Troas, on his way to Macedonia.

At Troas he expected to have met Titus, on his return from Corinth, after having delivered the Apostle's first Epistle there. Had he done so, he would have gone directly across the Ægean sea to Corinth: but being disappointed in this hope, and of course ignorant of the manner in which his epistle had been received by the Corinthians, as well as of the effect it might have had in working a change of conduct in their manners, and fearing that, in the unreconciled state of his mind, he might deal too harshly with the apostates, he proceeded in the first

place, to Macedonia, from which he had formerly been driven by so much persecution.

Passing through this country, where he again endured much trouble and vexation, 'fighting without,' with the perverse spirit of the inhabitants, and 'fears within,' on account of the perilous state of the church at Corinth, he visited Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and other places at which he had formerly established churches, teaching and exhorting the disciples to remain steadfast in the faith, and to look forward with the full assurance of receiving the glorious reward that would ultimately be theirs.

While in this progress, much time was spent by the Apostle in receiving the collections made by the different churches for their distressed brethren in Judea. In consequence, it occupied a longer period than he had anticipated; and accordingly, in its course, Titus joined him on his return from Corinth, and gladdened his heart with a full account of the manner in which his first Epistle had been received, and the excellent effect it had produced in healing the dissensions of the church, and restoring many wanderers to those paths from which the direction of false teachers had caused them so grievously to err. But Titus was constrained to add that several of these teachers were still active amongst the Corinthians — ridiculing the personal appearance of the Apostle, holding him up as an

object of derision and scorn, accusing him of irreligion, in attempting to overthrow the law of Moses, of possessing a light and changeable disposition, because he had not returned to Corinth at the time he promised, of exercising undue severity in his censures, and imperiousness in his writings, and, in short, using every means within their power to cast obloquy and scorn upon the cause he had embraced. The Apostle, therefore, determined upon immediately writing another Epistle to the disciples at Corinth, as he could not, in consequence of the work he had to do in Macedonia, proceed thither for some time to come.

In this, his second Epistle, which was written about five or six months after his former letter had been transmitted, he excuses himself accordingly, for not having repaired to Corinth at the period he had promised, on the ground that the severe treatment he must have exercised towards those who had not then amended their faults, could only have been productive of sorrow to them, and of great uneasiness to himself. He also commends the fervent zeal of the disciples against one, alluded to in his former Epistle, who had been guilty of a great sin, but allows them, now that he had repented of, and already been severely punished for his transgression, to forgive and be reconciled to him. He justifies his own conduct — vindicates the dignity and

excellence of the gospel — disclaims all connection with the false teachers, whom he fearlessly threatens with the visitation of miraculous judgments when he should come amongst them ; and, in order to establish the truth of his mission, modestly, but firmly, sets forth the miraculous gifts and revelations he had received. He then exhorts the disciples to repentance — to the performance of good works — to a firm abiding in the faith, and, finally, requires them to have their contributions in aid of the poor brethren at Jerusalem ready, that he might not be detained when he came to Corinth to receive their mite.

In the course of this Epistle, the Apostle likewise takes occasion shortly to advert to his own past sufferings for the Gospel's sake. He states that he had made numerous journeys, in which he had endured much watching, hunger, thirst, nakedness, and cold, and encountered perils without number from robbers, unbelievers, infidels, and false brethren ; that he had been five times scourged by the Jews, three times beaten with rods by the Romans and the Greeks, once stoned and left for dead, thrice shipwrecked, and once, in particular, in a manner so dangerous that he had been left a whole night and day on the sea. At what particular periods these various sufferings were endured, we have unfortunately, with one exception, that of his being stoned at Lystra, no means of ascertaining now.

Of course they were endured previous to the date of the Epistle being written, and are only there brought forward for the purpose of establishing the writer's pre-eminence, as an Apostle, over those false teachers at Corinth, who had undergone no such sufferings for the gospel's sake, but lived at home enjoying a life of comparative ease and comfort. Their belief in the truth of their own mission had never been put to trial; the Apostle's had already been severely so, and yet when he thus wrote to the Corinthians, neither he nor they dreamt of the still greater hardships he was destined to endure, and the death he was finally to suffer.

Having finished his Epistle, Paul forwarded it to Corinth by Titus, who now returned thither, accompanied by two of the brethren.

Of the effect produced upon the Corinthians by this communication we have no distinct account; but we may with all safety suppose it to have been considerable, for at an after period, when Clement of Rome wrote his Epistle to the same people, St Paul was considered as a divine Apostle, to whose authority reference might be made without fear of contradiction. All opposition at Corinth, therefore, from false teachers must then have been at an end.

About this period also, I believe, Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy, whom he had left behind at Ephesus. There is, however, a great and

striking diversity of opinion, both as to the time when, and the place from which, this Epistle was written. It is obvious, however, that it was sent to Timothy at a period when Paul had but recently left Ephesus, and was moreover in the expectation of returning shortly to it. This suits exactly with his situation while now in Macedonia, and I know of no other period of his history from which the same conclusion could be drawn. Those who obviate this argument do so upon the ground that Timothy was not at Ephesus at this period, because he had been some time previously sent into Macedonia, and subsequently was with the Apostle at Corinth when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans. But there is no inconsistency in supposing, that, after he had been sent into Macedonia, Timothy may have returned to Ephesus, (especially as from his first Epistle to the Corinthians it appears that Paul expected him to return) and that subsequently, after, or it may be even before receiving his letter, he joined the Apostle again in Macedonia.

The object of writing the Epistle originated in the Apostle's extreme anxiety for the welfare of the church at Ephesus, where he had passed so long a period. The Jewish sect of Essenes, or Essenians, had recently appeared and begun to spread at Ephesus. The followers of it had many peculiar customs and manners. They

were particular in their dress, austere in their manners, and affected an appearance of extravagant sanctity and monastic severity, totally inconsistent with a rational system of morality. They never married, but adopted and educated the children of other men in the peculiar tenets of their own sect, so as to keep its numbers up, without any direct or lineal descendants of their own. They entertained many ideas which were at variance with the simplicity of the Gospel, and yet, at this period, they had insinuated themselves into the church at Ephesus, and threatened considerable mischief, by subverting many of the principles upon which it had been established. To guard against this mischief tidings of which had been conveyed to his ears, the ever-active and zealous Apostle immediately wrote to Timothy, reminding him of the purpose for which he had been left at Ephesus, and that ‘the end of the commandment is love from a pure heart, and unfeigned faith.’ He also, while expressing gratitude to God for his own conversion, charges Timothy to maintain a good conscience, and gives him particular directions concerning the performance of public worship in the church, and the qualifications necessary to those persons who should be ordained officers in it. He then gives instructions for admonishing different classes of individuals, some of whom had probably adopted the manners and formal-

ity of the Essenians; warns Timothy to shun those who preached things contrary to the doctrines he had promulgated; and shows forth, in strong relief, the great advantage of pure and simple godliness when joined to a contented heart.

Having thus, as far as lay in his power, discharged his duty to the absent churches, the Apostle proceeded through the remainder of Macedonia on his errand of charity, and even extended his preaching into Illyricum, an extensive province to the north of Macedonia, where he established a Christian church, the remains of which, although the greater part of the country is now under the dominion of the Ottoman Turks, are in existence at the present day.

He then retraced his steps to a certain extent, and afterwards proceeded through the upper part of Greece to Corinth, in which, and its neighborhood, he abode for the space of three months. During his stay he resided in the house of Gaius—that eminent Christian, who, with Aristarchus, was dragged into the theatre at Ephesus, on the occasion of the mob raised by Demetrius—and occupied himself much in preaching to the disciples, and opposing, by every lawful means, the false teachers who had spread so much dismay and confusion among his flock.

While engaged in these laborious occupations,

which must of necessity have occupied much of his attention, he not only found time to collect together the various sums of charity which had been subscribed for the brethren of Judea, but even to write his long and beautiful Epistle to the Romans, so that, truly, if at any period of the Apostle's life it *could* have been said, that 'he ate the bread of idleness,' it was not while at Corinth, upon this occasion, that the stigma could have been applied.

It is difficult to say by whom, or at what precise period, the church at Rome was founded. Christianity, most probably, was first communicated to the inhabitants by some of those Romans who had been present at the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. At the period when St Paul wrote his Epistle, the church was in a very flourishing condition. No doubt the Apostle never had any personal communication with the members of it, but Priscilla and Aquila had made him fully acquainted with its affairs and its situation, and, on the other hand, his fame and zeal had long been known to, and admired by, the disciples at Rome.

The object of the Apostle, therefore, in writing this epistle, was to supply the want of his presence, and to establish the Roman disciples in their faith, by giving them that general view of the doctrines of the christian religion which he had preached to the churches that had enjoy-

ed the advantage of personal communication with him. At the commencement of his Epistle, he takes some pains to set forth the reality of his own Apostolic mission, because its authority depended upon the fact. Having done this, he proceeds to point out the relation in which man stood to his Creator — his apostacy from God — the universal sinfulness in which the whole world, Jews and Gentiles alike, had sunk, and the total impossibility of justification by obedience. This, the first great division of his subject, being finished, he states the offer of salvation held out to sinners by the mercy of God through the redemption of Jesus Christ, — the manner of justification by faith in him, — the imputation of his righteousness to the sinful sons of men — and the connection of this mode of justification with sanctification, or holiness, and obedience, — the whole forming a beautiful and sublime summary of the Christian faith.

In concluding this unrivalled piece of composition, towards which the whole force of his high talent had been directed, the Apostle gives a variety of excellent practical exhortations and instructions; states how often he had intended to come to Rome, although he had not yet been able to accomplish his purpose, but promises, if God be willing, to do so shortly; and finally bestows many affectionate salutations and blessings on his brethren there. In these he is

joined by Tertius, to whom the Epistle was dedicated, after which, without loss of time, he despatched it to Rome by the hands of Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea.

By this time the charity collected by the Apostle for the brethren in Judea had amounted to a large sum, and he became anxious to proceed to Jerusalem with it. That his own conduct and motives, however, might be placed where not even the tainting breath of suspicion could reach them, he solicited the different churches, who had aided in the contribution, to appoint a deputation to accompany him on his mission.

These having joined him, the Apostle intended to proceed from Corinth to Syria, by sea, but having received information, upon which he could depend, that certain Jews lay in wait for him at Cenchrea, the port for which he was to embark, in order to rob him of the treasure he had collected, and to murder him, he altered his intention, and returned by land through Macedonia, revisiting once more all the churches he had formerly planted, and again exhorting and confirming them in the faith.

In this journey, the deputies, together with Titus, Jason, St Paul's host at Thessalonica, and Luke, the sacred historian, who had now rejoined him, accompanied the Apostle into Macedonia, at one of the cities of which the

deputies separated from the remainder of the company, and proceeded forward to Troas to await their coming.

St Paul, with Titus, Jason, and Luke, after tarrying a short time longer in Macedonia, and celebrating the feast of the passover at Philippi, sailed from thence by Neapolis, and after a voyage of five days rejoined the deputies at Troas, having occupied about ten months in this excursion, from the time he left Ephesus till its conclusion.

At Troas he remained for seven days, apparently for the purpose of joining the disciples in their worship upon the Lord's day, for we are told that 'upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow.' They were not called together by Paul on purpose, nor, although he had been at Troas for six days, is there any mention of a similar meeting having taken place during that period. It is obvious, therefore, that, for some time previous to this date, it had been the custom of the disciples to meet together on the first day of the week in commemoration of the resurrection of our Saviour, although this is the first mention that is made of that day having been substituted by them in the place of the Jewish Sabbath.

In the assembly at Troas, upon the occasion

alluded to, Paul acted as president, and preached to the disciples in the upper chamber where they were assembled. The Apostle, having a great deal to say, continued preaching till midnight. His sermon, therefore, at first sight, may appear to have been of a most *inordinate length*; but in reality, although probably long, it was not inordinately so; for it must be remembered, that, according to their custom, the disciples did not upon this occasion meet until the evening. There being a great number of them present, however, the room in which they sat was very much heated, and they were obliged to open the windows for the purpose of allowing a free and ample circulation of air. This circumstance, in itself so trifling, led to a result which might have been serious, but which ultimately added another striking testimony to the truth of the Apostle's mission. Eutychus, a youthful member of the church, who was present, overcome by the labors of the day and the heat of the apartment, fell into a deep slumber during the Apostle's discourse. By some mischance he lost his balance, and falling from the window in which he sat, to the street, a height of three stories, was killed upon the spot. This accident interrupted the discourse, and occasioned much anxiety to the assembled brethren; but Paul, descending to the street, fell upon him, and embracing him, miraculously restored the spirit

that had fled. The disciples returned with Paul to conclude their worship, and remained with him, listening to his exhortations and preachings, till the break of day.

This formed another example of the indefatigable activity of the Apostle in accomplishing his work. Nor did it lessen his exertions during the day, that he had thus labored in the midnight hours. Without delay he despatched Luke and his companions by sea, with instructions to meet him at Assos; a maritime city about twenty miles to the south of Troas, to which the Apostle himself proceeded on foot.

At Assos — celebrated, I believe, for nothing but the famous quarries of the sarcophagus stone, which is said to consume the dead, with the exception of their teeth, in forty days — the Apostle neither preached nor remained for any time. Going on board his vessel he immediately set sail, and proceeding on his voyage reached Mitylene, about forty miles to the south of Assos. This was the principal city of Lesbos, one of the largest islands of the Archipelago.

Leaving Mitylene, on the following day, Paul sailed past Chios, a considerable island also in the Archipelago, famed both in ancient and modern days for its wine, its figs, and its marble.

Continuing his course, the Apostle, with his companions, next day reached Samos, about fifty

miles to the south-east of Chios. For many ages this island was a state of considerable importance, and governed as a commonwealth. But from the day of the Apostle, downward, the Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, and Turks have in turns been masters of it.

Stretching a short way to the east, the vessel next touched at Trogyllium, a promontory at the foot of Mount Mycale on the Asiatic coast, on which a small town of the same name was built. There the Apostle landed and tarried a night, and next morning, embarking again, set sail and reached Miletus, the capital both of Caria and Ionia, in the evening of the same day. This city when visited by the Apostle was one of some note, and celebrated for the extent of its different harbors, which were capable of containing the whole Persian fleet—for its neighborhood to the famous river Meander, which winds in many a maze through the surrounding plains—and for the splendid temple of Apollo erected in it. It is not certain whether the Apostle preached at all during the few days he remained at Miletus. If he did so, his exertions were not crowned with much success.

Although, in the course of this voyage, Paul passed the city of Ephesus, his anxiety to reach Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost, in order to avail himself of so good an opportunity of dispensing the collections he had received, pre-

vented his landing there. He was unwilling, however, to leave a country, to which, he had good reason to believe, he might never return, without bestowing a parting charge upon those who had the direction of the church established there. From Miletus, therefore, which was distant only about thirty-six miles from Ephesus, he despatched a messenger, requesting the elders of the church, being the twelve disciples upon whom he had formerly conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost, to adjourn to him. They, of course, at once complied with his desire, and on their arrival he addressed to them an earnest and pathetic exhortation, reminding them of how faithfully he had preached the gospel at Ephesus, even amidst all the dangers, troubles, and distresses by which he had been surrounded; and that, to the whole extent of his knowledge, he had publicly and privately taught them whatsoever might be profitable to their everlasting welfare, impressing upon both Jews and Gentiles the necessity of repentance, and of maintaining a firm and unwavering faith. He then stated his determination to proceed to Jerusalem, although he had been foretold by those possessing the spirit of prophecy, and was himself well aware, that sorrow and affliction would attend him there; and added, that however severe these trials might be, he was not to be moved from the strict line of his duty, for he was ready,

if it should be required of him, to lay down his life for the cause he had embraced. He likewise told them, that from henceforth they should behold his face no more, but that in parting from them he had the inward satisfaction of knowing that their blood would not lie at his door, for he had concealed no part of the truth from them; and, as the care of the church at Ephesus would now devolve entirely upon themselves, he beseeched them to be attentive to the welfare of those our Saviour had purchased with his blood. He moreover warned them of those heretical teachers, who, after his departure, would come like wolves to devour the flock, and of the still more dangerous enemies they were to expect would arise amongst themselves; he recommended them to the care and protection of the Almighty, praying that they might arrive at the perfection of knowledge here, and obtain a heavenly inheritance hereafter; and he cautioned them against avarice, and exhorted them to support the weak, and relieve the poor, in conformity to the comprehensive maxim of our blessed Saviour, 'that it is more blessed to give than to receive;' a maxim which, I may remark in passing, is not mentioned or alluded to by any one of the evangelists. In conclusion he knelt down and prayed with the disciples, who fell upon his neck and kissed him, weeping, with much sorrow, at being thus compelled to part from a

friend so highly valued and so justly esteemed by all.

This affecting scene having been terminated, his friends arose and accompanied the Apostle to the ship in which he again embarked, and with a favorable wind proceeded on his voyage to Cesarea.

QUESTIONS.

What was one of the Apostle's objects while passing through Macedonia and preaching?

What was the occasion, and what was the object of the Apostle's writing the second Epistle to the Corinthians?

What reason is there for supposing that St Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy about this time?

What particular object had the Apostle in view when writing this Epistle?

After visiting Macedonia, how long did he remain in Corinth?

What Epistle did he write whilst here?

What was his object in writing this Epistle?

What are some of the particular subjects of which it treats?

For what purpose did the Apostle solicit a deputation to accompany him?

What occurred while he was preaching at Troas ?

What is here remarked respecting the first day of the week ?

At what places did the Apostle call on his way to Miletus ?

Where did he hold an interview with the elders of the church of Ephesus ?

To what particular subjects did he call their attention ?

CHAPTER XV.

COOS — RHODES — PATARA — TYRE — PTOLEMAIS
— CESAREA — JERUSALEM.

ON the day after leaving Miletus, the Apostle reached Coos, situated about thirty miles farther to the southwest. This island, the principal town of which bears the same name, is one of the group of the Cyclades, in the Ægean sea, and in former days was celebrated for the stately temples erected by its inhabitants in honor of Juno and Apollo. It was also famed for its wines, and as being the birth place of Hippocrates, the physician, and Apelles, the painter.

From Coos, proceeding about forty miles to the southeast, the Apostle's bark on the following day touched at Rhodes; another and very celebrated island in the Ægean sea. No one need be reminded of its famous Colossus, — one of the seven wonders of the world, nor of the expertness of its ancient inhabitants in the art of navigation, nor of the exquisite clearness of its air, and delicious brightness of its climate.

Loosing from Rhodes, Paul and his companions sailed to Patara, a maritime city of Syria, in Asia Minor, much celebrated for the excellence of its harbors, and the beauty and magnificence of its many splendid temples.

Patara being the place of destination of the ship, in which the Apostle had come so far, he disembarked there, and finding another ship upon the point of sailing for Phœnicia, he took his passage in it, and proceeded on his way. In the course of this voyage, standing farther out to sea, in order to shorten the distance, the vessel, instead of taking the then more usual course of sailing betwixt the Island, and the main land of the province of Cilicia, passed to the south of the Isle of Cyprus, and proceeding in a straight course, soon after reached Tyre, the port to which it was bound.

Of all the places touched at in this voyage of the Apostle, Tyre is to be remarked as a place where the gospel had been preached before his arrival. Some of the disciples who had been scattered abroad, in consequence of the persecution which arose upon the death of Stephen, had been at Tyre, and apparently made some impression upon their hearers; for the Apostle found several brethren there; and, the most perilous and dilatory part of his journey being past, and plenty of time on hand to enable him to reach Jerusalem before the day of Pentecost, he re-

mained with them seven days, that he might be present at their assembly on the first day of the week, and address the words of counsel and exhortation to them.

In the course of his stay, many of the disciples, fearing what might befall the Apostle at Jerusalem, earnestly besought him to refrain from going there. But he, conceiving that a paramount duty called him thither, disregarded their entreaties, and at the end of the seven days, all things being prepared, he departed from them. An affecting scene then took place. All the disciples who were resident at Tyre, accompanied by their wives and children, followed the Apostle from the city to the shore. There, they kneeled down and prayed to him whose habitation is on high, that He would guide their teacher on his way; and while the bright sun shone upon them, and no covering but the blue sky hung above, they bade him farewell, and separated with many tears—the Apostle and his companions proceeded to their ship, and the disciples returned to follow the daily course of their duties at home.

The ship in which the Apostle sailed being loosed from Tyre, proceeded in a southerly direction, and soon after reached Ptolemais, about thirty miles distant. Few cities in the world have sustained more reverses, or undergone more changes. During the progress of the holy wars it suffered much, and frequently, both from

the infidels and Christians. In the middle ages, it was a place of great magnificence and strength, and then acquired the name of Acra or Acre. At the present day, it is one of the most considerable towns upon the coast ; but it is more distinguished for the magnificence of its ruins, than from any other cause. The most extensive are those of the churches of St Andrew and St John, the convent of the Knights Hospitallers, and the palace of their grand master ; the two last of which are a melancholy picture of the decay of that order, of which they once formed the brightest architectural ornaments it could boast of as appertaining to it.

Christianity was introduced here at a very early period ; and as at Tyre, so at Ptolemais, Paul found many brethren distinguished for their piety and zeal. Indeed, at this period, there was scarcely a town of any eminence in Asia, in which disciples were not to be found, so wonderfully had the religion, of which the apostle was so zealous an advocate and teacher, spread.

With these brethren Paul tarried for a day ; after which he departed by land to Cesarea, situated about thirty miles still farther to the south. On once more arriving at this celebrated city, the apostle took up his abode with Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons, whose name has been incidentally mentioned

before. In order to repose from the fatigues of his long and toilsome voyage, he abode here many days, although certainly not in idleness, nor in the utter abandonment of his usual occupations. During these days an incident well worthy of remark occurred.

Agabus, the Christian prophet, who had foretold the famine which occurred in Judea in the reign of the emperor Claudius, arrived from Jerusalem. We do not know whether he had any other motive in journeying to Cesarea, at this particular period, than to communicate to Paul, through the spirit of prophecy, the events which awaited him at Jerusalem. But having met the apostle and his friends, he approached the former, and unclasping the girdle which Paul wore, thus, in the manner of the ancient prophets using a symbolical figure to foretell a coming event, first bound with it his own hands, and then his feet, and thus standing before the apostle, uttered the remarkable prediction, that so should *he* who owned that girdle be bound by the Jews at Jerusalem, and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. No sooner was this prediction uttered, than Paul's friends crowding around him with one accord, earnestly entreated that he would not venture to Jerusalem; but his firmness was unmoved; he deemed that his duty led him to the holy city, whatever danger he might incur; — that the path in which he

was to proceed lay before him, and no consideration of a personal kind could tempt him to turn either to the right hand or to the left. He therefore answered his friends, ‘What, mean you to weep and to break mine heart: for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.’ This answer, while it shows the ready firmness and decision of the apostle’s character, also betrays the kindness and affection of his heart, and it seems to have had its effect upon the minds of his beloved friends, for when they saw that he would not be persuaded, they ceased farther to urge him, saying, ‘The will of the Lord be done.’

The apostle, accompanied by his own party, and some disciples from Cesarea, accordingly proceeded to Jerusalem. When he arrived there, he took up his abode with Mnason, a native of Cyprus, and one of the seventy, in whose house he met with other disciples and friends, all of whom received him joyfully, and with glad hearts, welcomed him to the Holy City. His fame had gone before him, and his usefulness was now universally acknowledged.

On the following day, he repaired to James, the only one of the twelve then resident in Jerusalem, who, having heard of his arrival, had assembled together the elders of the church to receive him. Having saluted these, after the

fashion of the East, the Apostle proceeded to give them a detailed account of the events which had occurred since his last departure from Jerusalem ; of the efficacy of his preaching, and the conversion of the Gentile nations ; and in conclusion, as no mean evidence of the Christian spirit, with which the converts were endowed, delivered to the elders the large sum of money he had collected from the different churches, to be distributed to the poor brethren in Judea. It is beautiful to contemplate this uncompromising advocate of salvation, through faith alone, thus inculcating, that a wide-extended charity was the best fruit that faith could produce on earth. His narrative and the accompanying donations were both received with joy, and the assembly glorified God for the eminent success he had been pleased to bestow upon the Apostle's mission.

Hitherto, it will be observed, the discourse had been confined to what had been accomplished among the Gentiles ; but before its conclusion, James drew the attention of the Apostle to the fact, that there was then assembled in Jerusalem, an immense multitude of believing Jews, many of them arrived from the provinces, in consequence of the approaching festival, who still retained a strong prejudice in favor of the observance of the Mosaic law, which they regarded with reverence, as eman-

ating directly from their God. He also added, that these believers had been informed, that the Apostle was in the constant habit of preaching to the Jews, who mingled with the Gentiles, and lived without the limits of Judea, that they should not observe the ceremonial law, and therefore that they regarded him with suspicion and distrust. To remove these, and efface the stigma which had fallen upon his character, in consequence of the general belief that he wished to abrogate the whole law, James earnestly recommended the Apostle, for a time, to conform to their customs, and pointed out an opportunity he then had of publicly and openly testifying, in the course of the high festival about to be celebrated, the falseness of the accusations which had been brought against him.

James knew not the consequences which were to result from this advice, nor had the Apostle, when he determined to comply with it, the least idea that it was to lead so directly to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Agabus. There were among the brethren of Jerusalem at that time, four men who had a Nazarite vow, which having just expired, they were upon the point of commencing the performance of the sacrifices and oblations usual at its termination. This occupied a period of seven days, previous to the final ceremony of shaving the head, and the sacrifices were, in most instances, attended with

a considerable expense. It was a common practice among the Jews, and reckoned a praiseworthy act in any one to join in contributing towards defraying that expense. By doing so, he was believed to be a partaker in the merits of the vow. The proposal of James, accordingly, was, that Paul should join himself to these Nazarites, and bearing part of their expenses, continue with them till the days of their purification had elapsed. This public performance of an act nearly related to the ceremonial law, would, he deemed, be sufficient to free the Apostle of the charge which had been brought against him.

In the hope of rendering himself more useful to his Jewish brethren, Paul consented to perform the part which had been assigned to him ; and taking with them the four men who had the vow upon them, he repaired to the temple, according to the usual custom in such cases, and announced to the priest his intention of contributing towards the expense of the sacrifices and oblations to be performed by the Nazarites.

Before the expiration of the seven days, a fearful tumult was raised, in which almost every unconverted Jew then residing in Jerusalem took part. Their breasts burned with envy and hatred towards the Apostle, and they eagerly watched an opportunity of gratifying their malignant feelings. This opportunity they soon

found ; for when the mind is bent on evil, it is not long in discovering a plausible pretext for indulging its wicked propensities. In the course of accomplishing the vow in which he had joined, Paul had occasion to be in the second, or women's court of the temple. Observing him there, some Asian Jews, who had heard Paul preach in the provinces, stirred up their brethren, crying aloud to them for help to secure the Apostle, whom they accused of teaching all men, everywhere against the people — that is, against the Jews of Judea, who conceived themselves entitled to, and indeed, received a particular degree of respect, not only from the Gentile proselytes, but also from their brethren of the provinces. This was a very artful accusation, therefore, to induce these Jews to join them, and accordingly, it had its full effect. They combined together, and moved by a desperate spirit of hatred and revenge, they accused the Apostle of preaching against the law — against the temple itself — and even of having brought Trophimus, a Gentile, into the second court, whereby the sanctity of the holy place was polluted. This accusation was utterly false ; but the Jews had observed Paul on several occasions walking the streets of Jerusalem with Trophimus, and it served their present purpose most gratuitously to assume that he had been guilty of introducing him into a holy

place, where no Gentile could enter without its being fearfully defiled. The punishment for such an offence was death, inflicted summarily by what was termed 'the rebel's beating;' that is, with innumerable stripes, till death ensued, without the accused having undergone any form of trial or condemnation. These stripes or blows were inflicted with staves, or sometimes, with the faggots of the altar itself, or whatever first came to hand.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the intention of the Jews was to slay Paul outright, and in all human probability they would soon have effected their purpose; for the whole city being stirred up, the people with one accord seized and dragged him to the outer court, where falling upon him, they beat him furiously with staves, having first taken the precaution to shut the doors of the inner court of the temple, lest by any chance the Apostle might have escaped to the horns of the altar and taken refuge there. But God, who watches over his own people, was pleased to prevent the consummation of so great a crime. At the angle formed by the northern and western porticos of the outer court of the temple, there stood a castle or fortress. The upper part of this fortress, in which a Roman garrison was constantly kept, was so constructed as to command a view of the different courts of the temple. The guards, from this

situation, having observed the immense and tumultuous assemblage of the people, reported it forthwith to Claudius Lysias, the Roman tribune, or captain of a thousand men, who commanded the garrison in the tower. This officer, immediately called together a number of his soldiers, and descended to the outer court of the temple, which communicated by a broad stair with one of the modes of access to the tower. On the approach of the guard, the Jews left off beating Paul, and the tribune drawing near, and imagining from the fierceness of their wrath that he must be some atrocious criminal, immediately commanded him to be attached by chains to a soldier on either side, which was the method of confining prisoners among the Romans, expressed by being ‘bound in *two* chains.’

The Apostle being thus redeemed from the fury of the multitude, the chief captain turned to his accusers, and demanded of them who he was, and what he had done that he should be so used. But he could obtain no answer ; for, as they had done at Ephesus, so at Jerusalem, the Jews cried ‘some one thing, and some another,’ each striving to be heard above his neighbor, till the renewed tumult became so violent, that the tribune, apprehensive of the result, ordered his prisoner to be carried into the castle.

On approaching the stair leading to the tower,

the pressure and resistance of the multitude became so great, that the soldiers to whom the Apostle was bound, were compelled to carry him, and their fellows had much ado to keep back those who followed, crying aloud, in nearly the same words which on a memorable occasion had been used in reference to the blessed Master of the Apostle, ‘Away with him, away with him — kill him, kill him.’

In this perilous situation, Paul’s presence of mind never for an instant forsook him. When nearly at the top of the flight of stairs, and on the point of being led into the castle, he turned to the tribune, and addressing him in the Greek language by way of attracting his attention, (for Lysias, although a Roman tribune, was a Greek by birth) demanded to speak with him. The tribune’s answer, at first sight, may appear to be exceedingly trifling upon such an occasion. It was conveyed in the form of a question; for he merely asked in some surprise, ‘Can’st thou speak Greek?’ The reason of his surprise, however, is easily explained. A short time previous to the occurrence of these events, an Egyptian impostor, pretending to be a prophet possessing the power of overthrowing the walls of Jerusalem at command, had arrived in Judea, accompanied by a horde of followers. He created some disturbance in the country; but Felix, who was procurator at the time, at-

tacked him with an armed force, slew his followers, and compelled the false prophet to seek his safety in a speedy flight. Claudius imagined the Apostle to be this impostor returned to Judea, and accordingly was much astonished at hearing his native language fluently spoken by one of such a caste. To his question, however, Paul answered that he was a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia — a citizen of no mean city, and earnestly besought the tribune to suffer him to address the multitude. This permission, when the tribune knew by whom he was addressed, was speedily granted, and the Apostle then beckoning for silence, which he at last obtained, spoke to the people in the Hebrew tongue. When they heard him thus speak in a language which they both knew and loved, the silence became deeper, and they listened with the more attention, because they knew that although the discourse of the Apostle was likely to touch upon matters connected with their religion, the Roman soldiers, to whom they bore no favor, did not understand the tongue in which he spoke.

In the course of his address, Paul first sought to propitiate his hearers by declaring that he was a man of their own nation — a Jew — and neither a Gentile nor a proselyte. He then proceeded to state, that, independently of enjoying this distinction by birth, he had been

educated at Jerusalem, in the school of one of their most eminent masters, by whom he had been instructed in the most strict tenets of their faith, and ever had been a zealous professor of the law. He next proceeded to narrate the manner of his conversion to Christianity, and took a short but comprehensive view of his past life, till he came to that period of it, when, in his vision or trance in the temple of Jerusalem, he had beheld his blessed Lord and Master, and received from him the command to depart from those who would not hear his testimony, and to go unto the Gentiles.

The assembled multitude heard him with patience till he came to this period of his history, but it was so contrary to their own pride of heart, and every pre-conceived notion they had entertained, to believe that a preacher could be sent by divine mission to the lost race they so heartily despised, that, with one accord, the riot was renewed, and they not only shouted aloud, ‘Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live!’ but with frantic violence they cast off their garments, intending immediately to stone him, and threw dust into the air to express their utter contempt and abhorrence of one they deemed to be so vile.

At this outrageous conduct, Lysias, not having understood a word of Paul’s address, and consequently being ignorant of what had thus

moved the people, but confirmed in his impression of the Apostle being some notorious criminal, commanded that he should be taken into the castle, and according to the barbarous practice of the Romans, scourged till he should confess the crimes he had committed.

Paul was accordingly hurried away, and, being stript, his arms were extended and his body fastened to a pillar in the manner usually adopted in thus putting an accused or suspected person to the question. But it was not lawful summarily to punish a Roman citizen by scourging or the infliction of stripes, nor even to bind him with thongs. It was necessary, that he should, by competent authority, be adjudged unworthy to be a citizen, and be regularly deprived of his privileges ; and even then he could only be beaten with *rods*. St Paul knew this ; he was acquainted with the law, — and therefore when the lictors either had bound him, or were in the act of binding him, he demanded of the centurion standing by if it was lawful to scourge a Roman uncondemned.

The centurion, aware of the situation in which he stood, returned no answer to the Apostle's question, but immediately went to the tribune, and told him to beware of what he was about, for the man he had bound, and ordered to be scourged as a criminal, was a Roman. Upon receiving this intelligence, the tribune hastened to his prisoner, and, as he stood, naked and

bound before him, questioned him if he was in reality a Roman? The Apostle answered, that he was, and the tribune then made the observation, that he had only obtained that privilege with a large sum, to which Paul replied in these simple and energetic words, bearing the stamp of truth in their very simplicity — ‘But I was free born.’

Those who had bound Paul, and were prepared to scourge him, now stole silently away; and even the chief captain, the commander of a thousand men, he who held the priests and council of the Sanhedrim at his beck, trembled before his prisoner, and loosed him from his bonds.

So far, the Apostle had triumphed over his persecutors. *He* had remained firm and dauntless in the midst of his difficulties, but *they* had trembled before an unarmed and naked man. The tribune, however, was desirous of seeing the end of so extraordinary a scene, and, urged by motives of curiosity, of knowing with more certainty of what the Apostle had been accused. He, therefore, instead of setting Paul at liberty, as many in his situation would have done, commanded the chief priests and the council of the Sanhedrim to assemble on the morrow, that they might hear his defence, and judge in the matter whereof he was accused. But the proceedings before this Council, we must make the subject of another chapter.

QUESTIONS.

What is said respecting Coos ?

For what was Rhodes remarkable ?

For what was Patara celebrated ?

What course did the Apostle take in sailing to Tyre ?

What is remarked respecting Tyre and the Apostle's stay there ?

What is related respecting his parting with the disciples at that place ?

What is said respecting Ptolemais ?

With whom did the Apostle take up his abode at Cesarea ?

What did Agabus foretell ?

What answer did the Apostle return to his friends ?

How was he received at Jerusalem ?

To whom did St Paul give an account of his success in preaching the gospel among the Gentiles ?

What convincing evidence did he exhibit of the truth of his account ?

What advice did St James give to St Paul, and what were the grounds of this advice ?

What course did St Paul pursue ?

What consequence followed ?

Describe the manner in which the Apostle was seized by the Jews.

Who rescued the Apostle from the violence of the multitude ?

What did the Apostle do in order to gain the favor of the tribune ?

What occurrence took place that caused the tribune's question ?

In what language did St Paul address the Jews ?

What was the import of this address ?

What was Lysias' conclusion in reference to the Apostle ?

By what means did St Paul escape the scourging commonly inflicted by the Romans on suspected persons ?

Why was he still retained a prisoner ?

CHAPTER XVI.

JERUSALEM — ANTIPATRIS — CESAREA.

SOME years before the period at which we have now arrived, the Sanhedrim, of which Rabban Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, Paul's ancient master, was now the president, had been expelled from Jerusalem, and subsequently held its ordinary meetings at Jabneth, a city of the tribe of Dan, at a short distance to the south of Joppa, where the principal members of the council usually resided ; but at present, on account of the celebration of the feast of Pentecost, the meetings of the council once more took place within the walls of the ancient city.

On the morrow, accordingly, Paul was brought down and arraigned before the august assembly, but his mind, like a cloudless sky, was serene and clear, and he gazed around him without betraying the least emotion either of terror or surprise at the situation in which he was placed.

Being called upon, after the manner of some tribunals of a more modern day, to plead his defence, before any accusation had been brought against him, he commenced by stating, that even until that hour he had lived in all good conscience in the presence of his God. But this remark was so displeasing to Ananias, the son of Nebeddeus, as impugning the justice of his tribunal, that he immediately commanded him, after the fashion of the East, in putting an unfortunate prisoner to silence, ‘to be smitten on the mouth.’

The pain occasioned by the sudden infliction of this unjust punishment, caused the Apostle, usually so guarded in his speech on similar occasions, to give way to a momentary irritation, and he sharply rebuked Ananias for sitting to judge him according to the law, and commanding him to be smitten contrary to the law — conjoining with his rebuke this remarkable prediction, ‘God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,’ which was afterwards so strictly verified, when this wicked man, who had wantonly and oppressively defrauded the inferior priests of their means of subsistence, till some of them were starved to death, at last perished in the vain attempt to hide himself in an old aqueduct in the neighborhood of the palace, after his dwelling had been reduced to ashes, in consequence of a tumult raised by his own son.

But the standers-by having told Paul that Ananias was the high priest, and his anger having passed away like the shadow of a cloud, he turned around, and, addressing them with much humility, gave them to understand, that, although he could not acknowledge Ananias to be God's high priest, meaning, doubtless, that he could not recognize any high priest of divine origin but Jesus, yet that he regretted the language he had used, because it was written, that no one 'should speak ill of the rulers of the people.'

Some think that Paul meant to deny altogether that Ananias was high priest; and, had he been aware of the situation in which he was placed, he might undoubtedly have done so with much appearance of truth; for, before this period, Ananias had been deposed and sent to Rome, and although, after a hearing, he was liberated, and returned to Jerusalem, there is no evidence that he ever had authority to assume the office of the priesthood again. But Paul had been absent from Jerusalem for several years, and probably did not know this feature in his history. Be this as it may, however, this little incident served to convince him that he would meet with no fair trial before so unjust a judge; and, therefore, perceiving that one half of the council, with many of the members of which he was personally acquainted, were Sad-

ducees, and the other half Pharisees, (the former of whom, it will be remembered, denied the resurrection, and the latter admitted it,) he combined the innocence of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent, and at once boldly called aloud that he was a Pharisee, and that of the hope and resurrection of the dead he was called in question.

In thus proceeding, the apostle discovered much sagacity, and a great knowledge of the human mind. He had cast down a bone of contention, and the ordinary result followed. Immediately the two parties, unmindful of the chief cause for which they had assembled, divided amongst themselves, and commenced a fierce and violent dispute about the resurrection from the dead—the existence of angels—and the separate being of departed spirits—till the scribes of the Pharisees declared that they found no evil in Paul, and that if a spirit or an angel had spoken to him, (alluding to his own account of his trance in the temple of Jerusalem, although they did not admit that Jesus had indeed appeared to him,) it was not their part to fight against God. But the extreme violence of these rulers of Israel, who sought to be distinguished as the worshippers of the true God, had, ere this, alarmed even the heathen captain for the safety of his prisoner, and he commanded a party of his soldiers to go down and take him

away by force, lest he should be torn to pieces in the midst of their unbridled wrath.

In obedience to the command of their leader, the soldiers straightway secured Paul and brought him into the castle. There, while reposing in his imprisonment during the silent watches of the night, the Lord appeared to him in a vision, as he had done at Troas, when sending him on a mission of mercy into Macedonia, and spake unto him the words of encouragement and exhortation, saying ‘Be of good cheer Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so thou must bear witness also at Rome.’

There is no doubt that this direct evidence of his being the object of the Almighty’s peculiar care, encouraged the heart of Paul, and led him, at a subsequent period, the more boldly to enter his appeal to Cæsar. Of such encouragement, in the situation in which he was placed, he stood much in need. He was a prisoner, lying in a dungeon, helpless, and without a friend who possessed the power to aid him. His enemies were active, powerful, and malicious; and no better example of the extent to which their hatred carried them can be given, than the fact that upwards of forty of them, being now sure that the tribune would not gratify their malice by condemning Paul without a legal trial, met together next morning, and bound themselves by an oath, that they would neither

eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. Such oaths, indeed, in the case of one who had forsaken the law of Moses, as they deemed Paul had done, were rather considered to be meritorious. It was this consideration, perhaps, which induced these conspirators openly to repair to the chief priests and elders, the majority of whom were Sadducees, and inform them of their design. By them they were received with open arms, and not only was their intention approved of, but the very form and mode of carrying their conspiracy into execution was finally adjusted. It was agreed that the members of the Sanhedrim should send a message to the tribune, desiring that Paul might again be brought before them, as they had some farther matters concerning his supposed delinquency to enquire into; and, never doubting that this request would be immediately complied with, it was arranged that the original conspirators should lie in wait and slay him in the outer court of the temple long before he could come nigh the council.

But the execution of their conspiracy, which, in all probability would have led to an unprecedented scene of bloodshed and confusion, was prevented. Paul's nephew, a young man, by some means or other, had become acquainted with the plot, and bearing much affection towards his uncle, immediately gained admission

into his prison, and informed him of it. The Apostle, although divinely assured of his own safety, did not hesitate to adopt those precautions, which would immediately have suggested themselves to any man of ordinary prudence. He called the centurion of the guard, and placing his nephew under his charge, desired that he might be forthwith conducted to the tribune, as he had somewhat of moment to disclose. The centurion, in the discharge of his duty, immediately conveyed the young man to his officer, who received him with affability and kindness, and taking him aside, privately obtained intelligence of all he had to impart. He then dismissed him ; first, however, with much prudence, cautioning him to keep his knowledge of the transaction private, and to tell no one what he had disclosed. It was obvious that the tribune, with the promptitude of an experienced soldier, intended to act upon the information he had received. Without wasting his time in idle speculations or inquiries, he called two centurions, or captains of one hundred men, and commanded them to make ready the soldiers under their command, together with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, in all, four hundred and seventy men — a force the Jews could not dream of resisting — to convey Paul to Cesarea by night. Horses too, were provided for the Apostle, who was not accus-

tomed to the rapid movements of the Roman troops. The more opposition therefore the tribune met with in his humane endeavors to obtain justice to his prisoner, the more determined he became to protect him ; and that his intention might not be rendered abortive from the want of proper measures having been adopted, he took care to summon a force equal to the duty, and prepared to meet the danger he conceived to be attached to the expedition he had in view.

Three hours after sunset, all was in readiness, and the cavalcade departed, Lysias having first written a concise and explicit letter to Felix, the Roman governor of Judea, narrating the events which had occurred. In this letter he states that he had not been able to discover that Paul had done any thing worthy of death or bonds, but that he had sent him to Cesarea to implead his cause at the governor's tribunal, and given his accusers commandment that they also should proceed there.

On the first night they reached Antipatris, a small town of Canaan, situated in a beautiful and fertile plain, on the way from Jerusalem to Cesarea. Here, having travelled upwards of forty miles in an incredibly short space of time, the party reposed till next morning, when, having got sufficiently the start of the Apostle's persecutors, the centurions, with their compa-

nies and the two hundred spearmen, returned to Jerusalem, leaving Paul to pursue his way to Cesarea with the seventy horsemen as a guard.

On arriving at Cesarea, the letter of Lysias, and Paul, as the person referred to, were presented to the governor. The first question he asked the Apostle was, to what province he belonged ; and being informed that his native country was Cilicia, he told him he would hear him when his accusers had arrived, and in the meantime directed him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall, part of that magnificent palace which Herod the Great had built for his own habitation, but which was now converted into the residence of the Roman governors, and part of it appropriated to the reception of prisoners who were deemed worthy of being treated with particular respect.

It is hard to say by what motives the governor was actuated either in this or in his subsequent conduct. The impulses which guide the actions of a bad man are not easily discovered. Felix had been a slave ; but he was now a freed man, and governor of Judea, which post he had obtained through the influence of his brother Pallas, a great favorite of the emperor. Violence, avarice, and lust were his ruling passions ; cruelty, injustice, and folly the attributes of his character ; and, as Tacitus tells us, he governed the province ' with all the authority

of a king and the violence of a slave,' till his oppression rose to so great a height, that in a very short period after the Apostle's first appearance before him he was recalled from his government, and, had it not been for the interest and intercession of his brother, would undoubtedly have been executed at Rome. Such was the man before whom the Apostle had now to plead his cause, but with what success this was done, we have yet to see.

In five days' time the high priest with the elders of the council arrived at Cesarea; and, considering the matter in hand to be of great importance, they brought in their train one Tertullus, a celebrated Roman orator, to support their accusation, and by his knowledge to supply the want of their own information as to the mode of procedure in a Roman court. On the following day Paul was brought from his imprisonment and arraigned before Felix, on which occasion Tertullus opened the proceedings with a speech admirably adapted to support his character as an orator; for an immense tissue of falsehood was woven upon a slight fabric of truth, and the whole ornamented with a load of flattery, which stood apparent in characters of strong relief. He accused Paul of being a pestilent and seditious fellow, and of seeking to profane the temple; and then, resting upon the fact that the governor had suppressed a numer-

ous and powerful banditti which infested Judea, and defeated the Egyptian impostor and his followers, to whom we have already alluded, he complimented Felix—a turbulent, unjust, oppressive tyrant—as the person through whom they enjoyed great peace and quiet. Of his accusation the orator offered no evidence, save that of the Jews themselves who were Paul's accusers; and they, of course, at once gave their testimony, crying out with one voice, 'that these things were so.'

To do justice to Felix, however, although there is good reason to doubt the purity of his motives, he did not give implicit credit to this testimony, nor at once receive it as sufficient to condemn the prisoner. He beckoned to Paul, desiring to hear him in defence. On receiving this permission, the Apostle immediately arose to speak, and not the least remarkable characteristic of his address, is the glaring contrast it affords to that of the known and celebrated pleader for the Jews. He avoided all allusions to the gross flattery with which the latter had complimented the governor, and proceeding at once to the merits of his case, plainly and directly denied the accusation of pestilence and sedition, the charge of seeking to pollute the temple, or of raising a tumult there, and demanded why those Asiatic Jews who had first found him in the inner court, when completing

the vows in which he had engaged, had not been brought to bear evidence, if they had aught to say against him. But he admitted that he worshipped the God of his fathers after the way his accusers called heresy — that is through the redemption of Jesus Christ, which rendered the intercession of an earthly priesthood unavailing. In this manner, besides adhering to the truth, in its naked and absolute simplicity, the Apostle made a defence well fitted to touch the prevailing prejudices of a Roman governor, and to attract the sympathy of one versant in the Roman laws, which in their equity permitted an almost universal toleration in matters of religious worship.

When Felix had thus heard both parties, he at once saw that the accusation against the Apostle proceeded from motives of private pique and enmity, and not from any desire on the part of his accusers to forward the ends of public justice. From his long residence, as governor, in Judea, he had a considerable knowledge of the subject in dispute also, and therefore experienced a personal conviction of the Apostle's innocence ; yet, nevertheless, he paid little regard to justice, and being equally unwilling, from motives which will presently appear, either to liberate Paul, or to gratify the Jews by condemning him, he postponed the farther consideration of his case, under the pretext of inquiring of the

tribune Lysias when he should arrive at Cæsarea, more particular information with regard to the tumult at Jerusalem. He therefore remanded Paul to a species of honorable confinement, merely putting him under the charge of a centurion, with instructions to allow him a certain extent of personal liberty, and permission to hold free communication with his friends.

In the meantime, ere many days had elapsed, Drusilla, the wife of Felix, arrived at Cæsarea, and learning the particulars of Paul's accusation and defence, expressed a desire to see and hear more of so extraordinary a man. This Drusilla was the second person of the same name whom Felix had married. The first was a Roman lady, the grand-daughter of Cleopatra and Antony; but the one in question was the youngest daughter of Herod, who had put St James to death, and was himself smitten in so remarkable a manner in his palace at Cæsarea. She was equally famed for her extreme beauty and the licentious profligacy of her manners. It is not, therefore, to be supposed that any motive but that of idle curiosity could actuate the desire of a person of so abandoned a character to see and converse with Paul. There was no difficulty, however, in gratifying her wish, and Felix sent for Paul and had him brought before Drusilla and himself.

Upon this occasion the uncompromising firmness and honesty of the Apostle's character, ap-

peared in a striking view. He stood before the man whose whole life had been a scene of iniquity and oppression—who lived in open adultery with his paramour—in whose hands his own life then was ; and the subjects upon which he reasoned were righteousness—temperance—and chastity—the virtues set in the opposite scale to those crimes of which the governor and his still more abandoned companion had been guilty. His reasoning he enforced by a fearful denouncing of the judgment to be passed upon the wicked, till Felix trembled before his prisoner, and, unable to withstand the force of his eloquence, desired him to go his way, and that when he had a more convenient season he would call for him.

But the more convenient season never came ; the impression made upon the mind of the governor was evanescent ; he returned to his dissolute courses, his abandoned companions, and his corrupt pleasures, till the whole bent of his enervated mind was, for the time, turned to the object of inducing Paul to offer him a bribe to connive at his escape. To farther this end, he often sent for the Apostle, and had many communications with him, but upon the upright minds of Paul and his friends he could make no impression. They would not do evil that good might come, and the unhappy governor, accordingly, wasted his time in vain attempts, till the

hand of retributive justice fell upon himself, and, at the instigation of those very Jews with whom he had so long trifled, he was recalled from his government and removed to Rome. Then, indeed, he adopted a decided course, for self-interest had become his prompter. It was his business to propitiate those Jews who were now *his* accusers, and accordingly, willing to show them a pleasure, he left Paul in bonds.

QUESTIONS.

How was St Paul treated on the opening of the council ?

What answer did he return to Ananias ?

And how did he apologize for this answer ?

What course of procedure did he take on perceiving that the council was composed of Pharisees and Sadducees ?

What was the consequence ?

What did the captain do, when he perceived the violence of the Jewish rulers ?

What was the import and effect of the vision, which St Paul had in the prison ?

What conspiracy was formed ?

By what means was it detected ?

What course did the tribune take in order to protect St Paul ?

What was the character of Felix before whom Paul was to be tried ?

What accusations did the Jews bring against St Paul ?

What was the import of the Apostle's defence ?

What was the result of the trial ?

What was the character of Drusilla ?

What was the effect of St Paul's reasoning on Felix and his wife ?

Why did Felix have frequent communications with Paul.

CHAPTER XVII.

CESAREA.

PORTIUS Festus succeeded Felix as governor of Judea. On arriving in his province he found the whole country one wide scene of desolation, distress, and wickedness. A violent spirit of dissension reigned amongst the Jews themselves; the priests were against the people, the people were against the priests, and each party did not hesitate to bring to their aid bands of those banditti who infested the land in thousands, and were ever ready to lend their swords to those who best paid for the use of them.

Finding matters in this state, the new governor did not tarry at Cesarea, but in three days after his arrival, went up to Jerusalem to devise some means by which peace might be restored to the unhappy land. The high priest, and others of the Apostle's enemies, seized upon the opportunity to prejudice the governor against him, and to poison his ear by the grossest mis-

representations of his conduct. Under the impression that they had been successful, they entreated the governor to send for him to Jerusalem, (for Paul still lay in bonds at Cesarea) on the pretence of its being more convenient to try him there. Had the governor consented to their desire, Paul would have been slain; for these wicked priests had provided themselves with hired assassins, to murder him by the way. There is no reason to suppose that Festus was aware of this conspiracy, and although his subsequent conduct shows that he bore no favor towards Paul, he at once refused the desire of the Jewish priests, and told them that if they had any wickedness whereof to accuse Paul, they might go down to Cesarea where they would be heard, as he himself intended to return thither in a few days.

Thus disappointed in their iniquitous scheme, but still bent on depriving the Apostle of existence, the priests journeyed with Festus to Cesarea, and on the day immediately following their arrival, the governor repaired to the Judgment Hall, and commanded Paul and his accusers to be brought before him.

On this occasion, the Jews brought many clamorous and grievous complaints against the Apostle. Of the nature of these complaints we are not expressly informed, but it may be gathered from Paul's defence, who answered that

neither against the laws of the Jews, nor against the Temple, nor against Cæsar, had he in any particular offended. The result was, that the Jews could not prove any of their accusations, and, consequently, it might have been presumed, that the innocence of the Apostle would have been declared. But, however just and equitable the laws of Rome may have been, their administration in the provinces was iniquitous and corrupt. The new governor, like his predecessor, was 'willing to do the Jews a favor,' and, to accomplish this end, honesty was set aside, the first principles of the law were trampled on, and instead of being liberated, the unfortunate object of this continued persecution was required to go up to Jerusalem, there to be judged of the things whereof he had been accused before Festus and the Jewish council, as more able to determine these matters.

But Paul, although not afraid to die — although even declaring his willingness to die, if he had committed any crime worthy of being punished with death, knew the duty of a christian better than calmly to yield to a measure which, he was well aware, could only end in the violation of every law, human and divine. He, therefore, at once and decidedly answered, that he stood at Cæsar's judgment-seat, the proper tribunal before which a Roman citizen should be tried, and could not be removed to Jerusalem. By

this Paul meant, that he was *then* standing at the judgment-seat of Cæsar, because every thing done by the governor of a province in his capacity of judge, was, by a fiction of the law, held to be done by the emperor himself. At the same time, however, he cast aside this fiction, and availed himself of the privilege he possessed of appealing directly to the emperor, because he well knew that the mind of the governor was prejudiced against him, and that he stood little chance of obtaining either a fair hearing or an impartial trial at Cesarea.

This right of appeal, which belonged to the Roman citizens, was frequently resorted to. It was originally introduced to protect the people against the decisions of unjust magistrates, and finally settled by receiving the sanction of the Valerian laws. In some instances the appeal was made to *the people*, and, according to the Sempronian laws, a Roman citizen could not be condemned to die except by the suffrage of the people. In other instances, and generally in cases of importance, the appeal was made to the Emperor, after which no proceedings could take place before the judge from whom the appeal had been made, and he was even forbidden, under severe penalties, to do anything, directly or indirectly, whereby the appellant might be hindered from proceeding to Rome to prosecute his cause.

Had Festus therefore been acquainted with the Roman laws, he would scarcely have hesitated to receive Paul's appeal. But it was no uncommon instance to find the governors of provinces as ignorant of the laws of their country, as many of the magistrates of more modern days have proved themselves to be of theirs. To remedy this evil, they were provided with a council, versant in the laws, the members of which sat behind a curtain drawn betwixt them and the tribunal of the judge, so that they might always be at hand to give advice when any point of difficulty occurred. To this council Festus now applied, (not to the Jewish Sanhedrim, as has been supposed by many,) and after advising with the members, and being made aware of the situation in which he stood, and the imperative nature of the Julian law, regarding the conduct of magistrates in such cases, he admitted the appeal, saying, 'Unto Cæsar shalt thou go.'

Before an opportunity, however, occurred of sending the Apostle to Rome, Agrippa, son of Herod, and formerly king of Chalcis, but now tetrarch of Galilee, and vested by the Roman emperor with royal authority over a large and extensive kingdom, arrived at Cesarea, with his sister Bernice, and a splendid train of attendants, to pay a visit of congratulation to the new governor of Judea. In all matters but one, this

Agrippa was reckoned an upright and honorable man. He was well versed in the laws and customs of the Jews ; he was acquainted with the different points of controversy betwixt them and the Christians ; he was just in his administration ; and he was generous and open hearted in his disposition. But he lived in open incest with his sister Bernice, a profligate and abandoned woman.

During the course of this visit, Festus happened, apparently more by accident than design, to mention Paul's case to Agrippa, taking manifest care however, in doing so, to put a favorable and most plausible coloring upon his own conduct. He had no idea that the king was to evince any particular interest in the matter, because he himself had conceived it to be one of no moment, and totally unworthy of his serious consideration. But Agrippa was more versed in the nature of the controversy which then agitated the minds of men, and he expressed a very strong desire to hear 'the man' himself.

Festus, naturally anxious to gratify his distinguished guest, assured him that his desire should be complied with on the following day.

On that day Agrippa came into the judgment hall with more than usual pomp. His sister Bernice was with him, and they were followed by a numerous and splendid retinue consisting

of the chief captains, and all the principal people of the city. Before this assemblage, the most splendid perhaps to which the gospel ever has been preached, yet met together merely from motives of curiosity to hear the Apostle's defence, Paul was brought in bonds. No way dismayed, no way overpowered by the dazzling glare around him, he stood undaunted and firm, while Festus took upon himself the task of opening his case to the assembly.

In his short but eloquent address, he stated that he had been much pressed by the Jews to put Paul to death; but that he had discovered no crime in him worthy of being so punished; that the prisoner had appealed to Cæsar, to whom he had accordingly determined to send him, but that he was placed in the extraordinary dilemma of being unable to state that any tangible or specific accusation lay against him. He therefore rejoiced, that he had an opportunity of again examining him with the aid of so able and learned a person as Agrippa; as he might then hope to elicit some information to be transmitted to the emperor, so that he would not appear in the absurd light of sending Paul to Rome without being able to signify the crimes which were laid to his charge.

This introductory address being concluded, Agrippa, who sat as president of the assembly, gave Paul liberty to speak in his own behalf,

but first, in a fair and honorable manner, warned him that one of the objects of his hearers, was to obtain a correct account of his case, and the crimes with which he was charged, to be sent to Rome.

On receiving this permission, Paul stood forth in the midst of an assembly glittering with gold and silver, while he had no ornaments to boast of but the fetters on his arms, and the chains which attached him to a Roman soldier on either side, and stretching forth his hands to give more force to his address, expressed the happiness he felt at being thus permitted to make his defence before one whom he knew to be well acquainted not only with the customs and manners, but also with the laws and controversies of the Jews, beseeching him patiently to hear all he had to say.

In the words of eloquence and truth, and in language beautifully suited to the state and character of his audience, Paul then proceeded to give a short but masterly account of the history and experience of his past life, particularly detailing the most wonderful periods in it, and adverting to those doctrines which had drawn so much persecution upon him, down to the time when he stood in the presence of the most august assembly he had ever witnessed, before which, he did not hesitate to assert that he still bore testimony to the truth of his great

mission, and to the reality of the sufferings of that blessed Redeemer who had died, but had risen again that he might be a light to enlighten the lost of the Gentile nations.

At this period of his defence, Festus, no longer able to contain himself, his, perhaps not acute, perceptions having hitherto been directed to one tangible point alone, arose, and with a loud voice exclaimed, that too much learning had made the Apostle mad. He knew nothing at all of the subject; he had never enquired about the matter; and the whole story appeared to him to be most incredible, and ridiculous in the extreme. But Paul was not to be moved by such an aspersion being cast upon his character. He turned round, and, with much earnestness, addressing the governor by the style and title usually bestowed upon persons filling so elevated a situation, assured him that he was not mad, but spoke forth the words of soundness and of truth. At the same time he appealed to Agrippa as to one who knew and must confess those things, for none of them had been done privately or in a corner, and concluded with this bold question, and equally bold assertion, ‘King Agrippa, believest *thou* the Prophets? *I know* that thou believest!’ Startled as he was by the suddenness of the question, and the imposing manner in which it had been asked, the powerful king and ruler openly confessed

that Paul had *almost* persuaded him to be a Christian ; — his address having this effect upon the talented Agrippa, while the ignorant Festus had deemed the speaker mad. But the Apostle well knew the shadowy-like effect of such momentary convictions ; and, in the energy of his feelings, stretching forth his bound and fettered hands, he exclaimed, with a loud voice — ‘ I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether, such as I am, *except these bonds.*’

The effect of this address was striking and instantaneous. The king, the governor, and every member of the assembly, started from their seats ; the tribunal, if I may use the expression, was dissolved, and Agrippa taking Festus aside, expressed it as his opinion that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or bonds, and had he not appealed to Cæsar, that he might, then and there, have been set at liberty by them. But his appeal had been received, and no inferior judicatory had now the right, either to absolve or condemn, nor, indeed, to take any farther cognizance of the matter.

Thus ended a scene in which the most eloquent and splendid address the Apostle had ever uttered, was actually thrown away. He never saw Agrippa, Festus, or Bernice again. He adhered to his appeal — the first and last

ever made by a Jew to the tribunal of a heathen — and accordingly, so soon as the requisite preparations were completed, he was shipped along with other prisoners, under the charge of a proper guard, for Rome.

QUESTIONS.

Who succeeded Felix as governor of Judea ?

In what condition did he find his province ?

What measures did the Jews take to procure judgment against Paul ?

What was the result of the hearing of St Paul's case in the presence of Festus ?

Why did St Paul appeal to Cæsar ?

What was the character of Agrippa ?

What was the effect of St Paul's speech on the audience ?

What was Agrippa's opinion of the Apostle's case ?

CHAPTER XVIII.

SIDON — FAIRHAVENS — MELITA — SYRACUSE —
RHEGIUM — PUTEOLI.

A SHIP of Adramyttum, a maritime town situated at the foot of Mount Ida, in Mysia, happening to be then at Cesarea, on its voyage homeward, the Apostle and his fellow-prisoners were embarked in it, under the charge of Julius, a centurion, who appears to have possessed a very kind and humane disposition. In the day of adversity friends sometimes fall away; but in the day of *his* adversity, so far as it at present went, Paul's friends only stuck the closer to him. In this voyage, the result of which, with regard to the Apostle, no one could possibly divine, Luke, the sacred historian, and Aristarchus, the Macedonian, accompanied him. It is supposed that Trophimus, the Ephesian, and Timothy, were also of the party, but, if they were, it was necessary, almost at the commencement of the voyage, to land them, while

coasting along the shores of Asia, on account of the serious indisposition of the former.

On the day following their embarkation the ship touched at Sidon, where the centurion humanely allowed Paul to go ashore, for the double purpose of refreshing himself, and of paying a parting visit to his friends. This city, which lay about sixty miles to the north of Cesarea, is as ancient as the days of Noah. For many ages it was distinguished for its high mercantile character, its luxury, and its wealth. But, like other places of note mentioned in the sacred writings, it underwent numerous changes. The gospel, however, was preached, and churches established within its walls at a very early period, and, amidst all its reverses, it has maintained a place ; for although its trade was long ago destroyed, its harbors choked up, and its streets sunk in silence and in gloom, Sidon still contains about sixteen thousand inhabitants, the great majority of which are Christians.

On departing from it, instead of steering across the Mediterranean Sea, which would have been their direct course, the mariners were compelled, on account of the wind blowing contrary, to proceed northward, and crossing the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia, to steer between Cyprus and the main land, till they reached Myra, a considerable city of Lycia,

where they disembarked, as the course of the ship of Adramyttium now lay in a different direction from that which they intended to pursue. At Myra they found a large ship of Alexandria on the point of sailing to Italy with a cargo of grain, the Romans being then in the habit of importing corn from Egypt, by the way of Alexandria. On board of this vessel the centurion embarked Paul, his soldiers, prisoners, and other passengers, to the number of upwards of two hundred and seventy. For many days their progress was very slow, on account of the variable nature of the wind, which at one period drove the vessel as far north as Cnidus, a promontory of Caria, containing a city of the same name, the inhabitants of which were worshippers of Venus. The ship, however, did not touch there, but, the wind changing, proceeded in a direction nearly due south, till it passed the promontory of Salmone, at the eastern extremity of Crete; from which, steering westward, it at last reached the Fairhavens, a port on the southeast side of the same island.

In this port, which still bears the same name, the mariners enjoyed the repose of many days, not only because the anchorage was good, but because it was in the neighborhood of Lasea, then a considerable city, where the supplies, of which they stood in need, might be obtained. St Paul, availing himself of this delay, and of

the permission again granted by his kind friend the centurion, went ashore to preach to the inhabitants of the island, which was one of the largest in the Mediterranean Sea. At one period it contained upwards of a hundred cities, and is supposed to have been originally peopled by the Philistines who fled from Canaan in the days of Joshua. Subsequent to the Trojan war many Greeks took up their abode there. Its ancient inhabitants were famous for archery, falsehood, debauchery, and piracy.

In the Apostle's day the character borne by the Cretans was far from good; yet, nevertheless, he succeeded in establishing a church in the island; and ever since his visit to it, in the midst of all the changes it has undergone, Christianity has maintained a sort of footing there, although, like the island itself, both its fame and its name are now at the lowest ebb.

So much time was spent at Crete, that before the vessel was again ready to put to sea, the great fast of the Atonement, which terminated about the latter end of September, was past. After that period, the ancient mariners, who generally kept within a moderate distance of land, and in the winter never went to sea at all, deemed navigation, especially in those seas, to be dangerous. Paul was aware of this fact, but in all probability had likewise received some divine intimation of the perils they were to un-

dergo ; for he remonstrated with the centurion on the folly of proceeding on their voyage at that season, and warned both him and the master, that their doing so would infallibly be attended with danger to themselves, and much damage to the ship. A consultation was then held, but the Apostle's advice was overruled, and his warnings disregarded. The Fairhavens was not a commodious harbor to winter in, and, apparently swayed by this circumstance, the greater part of those who formed the council were of opinion that they should depart, and, coasting along the island, make the attempt to reach Phenice, another seaport upon the western side of Crete, possessing a commodious and sheltered harbor, in which they might winter in safety and comfort.

In pursuance of this determination, when a soft breeze from the southeast arose, they loosed from the Fairhavens, and, proceeding in a westerly direction, had well nigh reached the place of their destination, indeed within a few miles of it, when the wind suddenly changed, and blowing furiously from the northeast, they were unable to contend against its violence, but, putting about, allowed the ship to drive helplessly forward, at the mercy of the storm.

In this situation they passed Clauda, a small island to the south of Crete, where, fearing that shipwreck might be their fate, the mariners,

after considerable exertion, succeeded in securing the boat and bringing it on board the ship, to prevent its being lost. They then used such other precautions as were known to the navigators of the time, but, notwithstanding their exertions, the ship was rapidly driven towards the continent of Africa. Nigh these coasts the sands of the greater and lesser Syrtes, the terror of ancient mariners, lay; and, from the rate at which the ship was driven, fears were entertained that it might be wrecked upon these sands. To avoid this danger, or, at least, by protracting the period of its arrival, to take every chance of a change of wind occurring, they struck their sails, and, in technical language, ‘scudded under bare poles.’ The storm, however, increasing, the crew, on the following day, were obliged to cast out part of their cargo; and, on the third day, even part of the tackling of the ship was thrown overboard. For many days this fearful tempest continued; the sun, the moon, and the stars, were alike hidden from their view, till at last both passengers and crew gave up all hopes of being saved. In this dread extremity, when a dark and gloomy despair had seized upon almost every soul, the angel of the Lord stood by Paul in the night-time, and revealed to him that not one in the ship should perish, for that he must stand before Cæsar, and God had given him the lives

of all who sailed with him. Without delay the Apostle made the wonderful interposition of Providence known to the ship's crew, and exhorted them to be of good cheer, for they should be saved, although undoubtedly they must suffer shipwreck, and be cast upon a strange island.

In accordance with this revelation, on the fourteenth night of the tempest, the mariners, from peculiar signs known to themselves, deemed that they drew nigh to land. As a proper measure of precaution they cast the lead, and found that their conjectures were correct. They cast it again, and found that they approached still nearer to the shore. In this situation, dreading shipwreck, looked upon by the ancients as the worst of deaths, they threw out four anchors from the stern of the ship, to stay her driving, and impatiently waited till the return of day should enable them to discern the position in which they were placed. Meanwhile, however, the seamen on board had laid a plan for their own escape. They pretended that it was necessary to lower another anchor from the fore part of the vessel also, and for this purpose proceeded to let down the boat into the sea, intending to drive ashore in it and leave the passengers to their fate. But their pretence was so palpably absurd, that their real intention was seen through, and communicated

by Paul to his friend the centurion, with the additional information that, from the utter incapacity of those left behind to manage the ship, in any way, they could scarcely count upon a chance of being saved, except the mariners remained. This time the centurion gave heed to the Apostle's words, and took the most effectual measures to prevent the meditated desertion by commanding that the ropes attaching the boat to the vessel should be cut, and the former sent adrift. This was done accordingly, and the recusant mariners were forced to partake of the same common danger with their neighbors.

But the coolness and presence of mind of the Apostle never once forsook him. He foresaw that exertion would be necessary, and to prepare for this he besought the whole assembled crew to take some food, assuring them that *not a hair* should fall from the head of any of them. This was the strongest assurance of safety he could give. In the East it was proverbial; and so unlucky was it deemed among mariners to *dream* of shaving the head, that during the continuance of a storm, no one was allowed even to cut his hair. All on board accordingly, re-assured by the Apostle's confidence, partook of food, after which they lightened the ship, cast out the remainder of the cargo, and prepared themselves for whatever might befall.

The dawn of day soon discovered the formi-

dable aspect of an unknown shore, surrounded by dangerous and frowning rocks. In this situation escape seemed scarcely possible ; but, on a more minute survey of the coast, a small creek was discovered, with a sandy bay at its farther extremity, into which the mariners determined to run the ship. The anchors were accordingly taken up, the *rudder-bands loosed*, that is, the rudders, in those days in the shape of two large and broad oars on each side of the vessel's stern, were allowed to fall into the sea, so as to be of use, the mainsail hoisted, and the vessel run ashore. The original intention of the mariners, however, was not carried into execution ; for the vessel missing the creek, which at the present day bears the name of ' Paul's haven,' struck upon a point where two seas meet, and the prow being firmly fixed there, while the stern was afloat and exposed to the violence of the waves, it was soon beat to pieces.

In this extremity the soldiers of the guard, fearing that they might be called to account if their prisoners should escape, advised that they should be killed. But Julius, the centurion, again stood the friend of Paul, and, from regard to him, prevented this cruel intention being carried into effect, giving command that they who could swim should first cast themselves into the sea and get to land, and that the rest should follow upon planks, or whatever broken parts of

the ship they could lay hold of. This command was obeyed, and every one of the two hundred and seventy-six living beings on board the ship escaped safe to land.

The report of the disaster having soon spread abroad, the natives flocked down to the shore to meet the shipwrecked strangers. From them they understood that the land upon which they had been wrecked was Melita, or Malta, a well known island betwixt Sicily and the coast of Africa, about sixty miles distant from the shores of the former place. This island is supposed, by some, to have derived its name from the uncommon quantity of honey found in it; but by others, with much more probability, on account of its having been a place of refuge to the ancient Tyrians in their voyages to Spain. It is about sixty miles in circumference, and in former days was little else than a barren rock, tenanted by about twelve thousand miserable inhabitants; but now, it has become quite the reverse, and produces abundance of fruit, cotton, and other productions, besides containing nearly fifty thousand inhabitants, amongst whom a sort of half-breathing Christianity, first introduced into the island by the Apostle, still exists.

The inhabitants of the island are said to have been barbarians; but this is not to be taken in the literal sense of the word, for the Greeks were in the habit of applying the term, as a

common name, to distinguish all others from themselves. They were undoubtedly, however, not in a very civilized state, but nevertheless had as much of the milk of human kindness within their breasts as the people of many a more enlightened nation. They received Paul and his companions with much kindness; and, observing their wet and shivering condition, immediately gathered together sticks and chips, and made a blazing fire, at which they might both warm and dry themselves. The Apostle, too, with his usual zealous activity, lent his hand to the work of charity. He aided in gathering sticks, and laid them upon the fire; but while so engaged, a viper, which had been concealed amongst them, fastened upon his hand. The inhabitants of the island knew this to be a most venomous reptile, whose bite was often instantaneously fatal; and observing Paul with the bonds of a prisoner upon his person, they immediately concluded him to be some atrocious criminal, whom the vengeance of the gods had only suffered to escape from the horrors of the sea, that he might suffer a still more painful and exemplary death. But Paul shook off the venomous reptile, and remained unhurt. Nevertheless the islanders continued to gaze upon him, expecting that he would have swollen from the effects of the poison and dropped down dead. When, however, they saw no such sudden change

take place, but beheld the Apostle standing before them in perfect health, with that sudden revulsion of feeling peculiar to untutored minds, they called aloud that he was a god, mistaking him, probably, for Hercules, who was one of their deities, and believed to possess the power of curing the bite of serpents. Since this occurrence it has been said, although we do not vouch for the truth of the anecdote, not only that there are no poisonous reptiles in Malta, but that, if any venomous animal be brought from another land and cast upon its shores, its poisonous qualities immediately depart.

The news of the shipwreck had by this time reached the ears of Publius, the chief man or governor of the island, whose residence and possessions were not far distant. He was a man of a charitable disposition, and accordingly hastened to the spot, and, with exemplary kindness, carried to his house and entertained the whole company courteously for three days, till they could procure residences in other parts of the island. He had no expectation of receiving any return from shipwrecked strangers; but Paul, although he had neither gold nor silver, had it in his power to bestow that which mines of both would have failed to purchase. The father of Publius lay sick of a grievous fever; and the kindness of his dutiful son met with the unlooked-for return of beholding him at once re-

stored to perfect health, through the prayers and intercessions of the Apostle in his behalf. Nor were the exertions of the Apostle confined to one solitary instance. The fame of this cure spread throughout the island, and forthwith *all* who were diseased came to him, and *all* were healed.

Having thus paved his way by acts of kindness and charity, the Apostle ceased not to preach and to teach the people; and, although we have no very credible information of his success, it has been said by some that Publius himself was amongst the number of his converts, and was created bishop of the island. But it is certain that the exertions of the Apostle were received with kindness and respect, and during the three months of his stay in the island he was treated with distinguished honor by the inhabitants. But the hour of separation at length approached, and the last act of the grateful islanders was to supply the shipwrecked strangers with every thing necessary for their approaching voyage.

At the commencement of the following spring, accordingly, the Apostle and his companions embarked in another ship belonging to Alexandria, which had wintered in the island. The name of this ship, or, more properly speaking, the sign affixed to its prow, was that of 'Castor and Pollux;' 'the picture,' as Lightfoot quaint-

ly tells us, ‘of two young men on white horses, with either of them a javelin in his hand, and by him half an egg and a stone, whom heathen folly and superstition conceive to have been twin sons of Jupiter, and favorable deities to them that sailed on the sea.’

In this ship the Apostle soon reached Syracuse, one of the most renowned and splendid cities of the ancient time. It was situated on the eastern side of Sicily, commanding a beautiful prospect both of sea and land. Its harbor was surrounded with splendid buildings, supported upon walls of white marble. In its best days it was not less than twenty-two miles in circumference, and not only the largest, but by far the most wealthy city possessed by the Greeks, in any part of the world. The spoils of Carthage itself in an after day were not equal to those of Syracuse.

In this once celebrated place the Apostle remained for three days, and then proceeding on his voyage, on the following day arrived at Rhegium on the southern coast of Italy. Here the vessel tarried for another day ; but, a soft south wind blowing fair for their destined port, the crew once more set sail, and, passing through the straits of Messina, after a prosperous voyage of twenty-four hours, arrived safely at Puteoli, now called Pozzuoli, in the kingdom of Naples, and about one hundred miles to the south of Rome.

On arriving at Puteoli, Paul found several Christian brethren, and by the permission of his friend Julius, whose unvarying kindness and attention to the wishes of his prisoner, from the hour he was placed under his charge at Cæsarea, is worthy of the highest praise, he remained with them for seven days. At the expiration of this time, the whole band proceeded on their way, by land, to Rome. Nothing worthy of remark appears to have occurred on this journey till they reached Appii Forum, an ancient city of the Volsci, about fifty-one miles distant from Rome, where they met a numerous body of the brethren of that celebrated city, who, hearing of the approach of the great Apostle, came thus far to meet him. Advancing on their journey about eighteen miles farther, they reached Tres Tabernæ, or the Three Taverns, another city upon the Appian way. Some have supposed this to have been a parcel of inns for the accommodation of travellers. But the reverse seems to be the case; for, in the time of Constantine, there was a bishop of the *city* called ‘Tres Tabernæ;’ and besides ‘Tabernæ’ was the name given by the Romans to their frontier towns built to repel the incursions of the barbarians. There, another party of the brethren met them, and joined the procession, so that the Apostle, although bound in chains, entered Imperial Rome in a species of triumph, rejoicing

in his heart, that he had at last reached a land where Christians might publicly avow their faith without fear of persecution or dismay.

QUESTIONS.

What friends of the Apostle accompanied him on his voyage to Rome ?

To what place was the ship bound, in which the Apostle sailed ?

At what port did they first touch ?

At what place did the Apostle disembark ?

How long did the ship remain at the Fair-havens ?

What is said of Crete, and its inhabitants ?

What opinion did St Paul express to the centurion respecting the voyage ?

What occurred when they had nearly reached the place of their destination ?

How long did the storm continue ?

What did Paul announce to the ship's crew as revealed to him ?

What did the mariners attempt ?

Why was it necessary to disconcert their plans ?

How did the crew, soldiers and prisoners eventually make their escape ?

What is said of the island on which they landed, and of its inhabitants ?

How did the natives regard St Paul when they saw him shake the viper from his hand ?

How were the shipwrecked mariners treated by the chiefman of the island ?

What miracle did St Paul perform ?

What is said of Syracuse ?

At what port did they arrive after passing through the straits of Messina ?

At what places did they call before they reached Rome ?

CHAPTER XIX.

ROME — SPAIN — BRITAIN, &c. — CONCLUSION.

ON the arrival of the train at Rome, the fellow-prisoners of Paul were delivered over to Afranius Burrhus, the prætorian Præfect, whose duty it was to receive prisoners from the provinces, and see them lodged in the common jail ; but, instead of having this hard fate assigned to him, the Apostle, on the recommendation of his steady friend, the centurion, was allowed to dwell in a private house under the guard of a single soldier only. The intercession of the centurion, however, could not relieve him from the distinguishing badge of a prisoner — the chain, which, of sufficient length to allow both parties to move at ease, attached him to his guard.

In this situation, three days after his arrival, the Apostle called together the chief of the Jews — many of that nation having returned to Rome on the death of their persecutor, Clau-

dius — and informed them of the persecution he had suffered in Judæa, of the cause of that persecution, and of his appeal to Cæsar, the object of which was not to condemn his nation or people, but simply to establish his own innocence before the emperor. In answer to this communication, the Jews informed him that they had not received letters from Judæa on the subject, nor had any of the brethren who had since arrived from thence brought any matter of accusation against him; but they desired to hear his doctrines, and to learn somewhat of the opinions of a sect which they knew to be every where spoken against.

No way unwilling to indulge them in this desire, a set day was fixed, when these Jews, accompanied by many of their brethren, returned to the house of Paul, where, from morning till evening, he preached the gospel to them, proving from *their own scriptures*, according to his invariable practice, that Jesus was the Messiah. His arguments convinced some, and they believed; but the hearts of others were hardened, and they believed not; and these the Apostle dismissed, denouncing their awful doom in the words of their own prophet, which they could not fail to remember, if they did not understand.

For two years after this period, Paul continued to dwell in his own hired house, sup-

ported partly by the aid of contributions received from some of the churches he had formerly established. All who came to him he received, daily preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concerned salvation with unlimited confidence, for no one interfered with or prevented him.

In the lapse of time, he was called before Nero, and obtained a partial hearing of his cause. It was upon this occasion he suffered one of his most severe trials. Every friend he had forsook him ! Fearing to incur the wrath of the dreaded Nero, his dearest companions deserted him, and those who had travelled miles to meet him, and who, when no storm appeared upon the horizon, were ready to stand by and support him, left him, in the hour of trouble, to plead his cause alone. But, no accusers being present, the emperor treated the whole matter with contempt, and dismissed the Apostle from his presence. The eloquence of his defence, however, had struck some of the individuals of Nero's court ; they listened with attention, and afterwards enquiring more minutely into the doctrines of the Apostle, were converted. Among these are reckoned — Terpes, an officer of high rank in the household, who afterwards suffered martyrdom for his faith, Nero's cup-bearer, and Poppæa Sabina, a most accomplished, but by no means a

virtuous, lady. Onesimus, the servant of Philemon, to whom I shall immediately have occasion to allude, is also reckoned among the converts of this time.

The species of restraint, under which the Apostle was placed, gave him much more leisure time than he otherwise would have had ; and this he employed in writing many epistles, the greater number of which have been preserved unimpaired to our own day. These are, his Epistles to the Philippians—to Philemon—to the Colossians, and to the Ephesians ; all of which, like the excellent letters of Ridley, Latimer, Rogers, and other reformers, of a long after day, who, in their turn, tended so much to forward the interests of true religion, were written while he was in bonds.

The first of them was written upon an occasion that called forth expressions of gratitude and thankfulness on the part of the Apostle. He had always maintained a great affection for the Philippians, and they, in their turn, indulged a true esteem for him ; but their regard did not confine itself to expressions merely. The evil tidings of the Apostle's imprisonment at Rome had been conveyed to their ears, and they feared that, in a land of strangers, the friend of their bosom might be left forsaken and in want. Without loss of time, therefore, they contributed a considerable donation for his sup-

port, and sent it forthwith by the hands of Epaphroditus, one of their principal teachers, if not the bishop, of their church. This good man readily undertook his errand of mercy ; but while he was at Rome, he was seized with a grievous illness, that detained him there for a lengthened period. In the meantime, Paul had prepared his Epistle, and when Epaphroditus recovered, he despatched it by him to his brethren at Philippi. Accordingly, with many expressions of the tenderest affection, and without the slightest mixture of that rebuke which characterises many of his Epistles to the other churches, he gratefully acknowledges the aid he had received from those who were always forward in a work of mercy — expresses his great thankfulness for their steady continuance in the faith — assures them that they need not lament over his fate, because he was ready either to live or die for the gospel's sake, although he was not without hope that he might yet be spared to meet them again — exhorts them meanwhile to persevere in the course of godliness, charity, and mercy, in which they had hitherto been found — promises to send preachers to their aid — cautions them against false teachers and the enemies of the cross of Christ — and bestows on them many excellent and affectionate exhortations with regard to their general conduct in life.

The occasion of his writing the second of these Epistles was different. It was written to an individual, and not to a church. Philemon, a convert of some distinction at Colosse, a considerable city of Phrygia, lying betwixt Laodicea and Hierapolis, had a slave of the name of Onesimus, over whom, as the law then stood, he possessed the power of life and death. This slave had been guilty of some dishonest or fraudulent conduct, and, afraid of the punishment to which he had in consequence subjected himself, fled from his master's service. In the course of his wanderings he arrived at Rome, where, by accident, hearing the Apostle preach, he was converted, and finally manifested so excellent a disposition, that Paul became deeply interested in his welfare, and wrote his Epistle to Philemon, to induce him again to receive his erring but repentant servant. The Epistle is a masterpiece of persuasive eloquence, and, in some parts of it, there is a degree of mingled lightness, if I may use the expression, and familiarity, that, coming from the great Apostle, must have been highly acceptable to him whom it was addressed. Thus, in mentioning Onesimus, which signifies 'useful' or 'profitable,' he makes the play upon his name — 'which in time past was *unprofitable*, but now *profitable* to thee and me.' A similar play is also made upon Philemon's name ; so that, at this period at least,

although his limbs were fettered, the flights of the Apostle's fancy were in no degree impaired. Onesimus himself carried the Epistle to his master, and in him Paul was not mistaken, for he subsequently became a distinguished Christian, and finally suffered martyrdom, being stoned to death at Rome.

The Epistle to the Colossians was written about the same time as that to Philemon, and also sent by Onesimus. It bears the distinguishing feature, that it was written to a church the Apostle had not been the founder of, and to a people whom the Apostle had not seen, for he had never been at Colosse; but in the course of his travels he had become acquainted with Epaphras, one of the most distinguished teachers in the Colossian church, who, in the hour of his tribulation, came to Rome to see him. The event of this journey, undertaken in the true spirit of friendship, was unfortunate, for Epaphras himself was made the companion of the Apostle's bondage. In this situation, it came to his ears that false teachers, taking advantage of his absence, were propagating erroneous doctrines amongst his flock, teaching them to look upon angels as intercessors with God, instead of the one true Mediator only. It is not improbable that these teachers were disciples of the school of Plato, or of the sect of the Essenes, to which we have already alluded, as this was a fa-

vorite doctrine of both. Epaphras, therefore, knowing the high esteem in which the Apostle's name was held at Colosse, besought him to write an Epistle to the church there, to warn them of these errors, which he, ever ready to be of service to his fellow creatures, did. In his Epistle, accordingly, while he expresses his gratitude for the good accounts he had heard of their progress in Christianity — their zeal — their faith — their love, and assures them how earnestly he prayed for a continuance of their welfare, and their increase in all that was praiseworthy and commendable, he takes an opportunity of instructing them in the fullness and freedom of the gospel salvation, warns them against those teachers who sought to inculcate false doctrines, and against the worshipping of angels in preference to the Son of God, entreats them to set their affections on things above, and not on the things of earth, to be kindly disposed towards one another, and concludes with most affectionate exhortations and admonitions on various general points, while, at the same time, he gives them many directions with regard to their conduct in the social duties of life.

With regard to the Epistle to the Ephesians, there are many disputes whether it was really addressed to the church at Ephesus or not, and therefore it is difficult to say upon what particular occasion it was written. Some maintain that it

was, as in our copies of the New Testament, addressed to the Ephesians; others, upon the authority of some ancient manuscripts, that it was addressed to the Laodiceans; and a third class that it was a *general* Epistle to all the churches in Asia, of which many copies were made, and a blank left in the first verse, 'To the saints which are at ———,' which was afterwards filled up with the name of the church to which each Epistle was despatched. This may have been the case, and if so, without entering into the narrative of all the controversies upon the point, we are warranted in taking the Epistle in our copies of the New Testament as addressed to the Ephesians. In it, accordingly, the Apostle follows his usual course of persuasion to a firm belief in the doctrines of the Christian religion — contrasts the present state of those he addresses with their former lost condition — prays earnestly that they may be strengthened and increased in faith, knowledge, and holiness — bestows many excellent exhortations and advices upon them, both with regard to their spiritual conduct, and to the proper discharge of their social duties in the various relations of life, and entreats them to persevere in prayer as the best means of maintaining a successful warfare with the powers of evil that were ever ready to stand arrayed against them.

In all these, as well as in all the Apostle's

other Epistles, no one can fail to observe the many happy and beautiful allusions made to the situation, manners, customs, and habits of the parties addressed, or to the localities around them, with a view to illustrate the arguments he sought to enforce. In this style of writing the Apostle particularly excelled.

The time now approached when Paul was to regain his freedom. The Jews, who had so boldly accused him in Judæa, knew that he had committed no crime of which the Roman law could take cognizance, and they did not venture to support their accusation at Rome. To have done so, indeed, would have endangered their own safety, and, as *false* accusers of a Roman citizen, subjected them to a severe and serious punishment. After the lapse of two years, therefore, the Apostle was set at liberty from the species of honorable bondage, or imprisonment at large, in which he had been detained.

From this period, no more mention is made of him by the sacred historian. The detail of the subsequent acts of the few remaining years of his life cannot, therefore, be regarded as equally authentic with that which has been already given. But still, to many of these acts, there is the concurrent testimony of different writers of authority; and even to those, the evidence of which rests not upon so broad a basis, there is testimony afforded which it would be

matter of difficulty in our day wholly to overturn. The following remarks, therefore, will be regarded as depending upon the authority of the apostolic fathers, whose words are not to be treated altogether with contempt, nor, in some instances, to be looked upon merely with a light and passing glance.

The first act of the Apostle, after being freed from his thralldom, when he recalled to recollection his mission to the Gentile nations, was, to proceed from Rome, and travel northward through the greater part of Italy. No specific detail of this, nor, indeed, of any of his future journeys, has been handed down to posterity ; but as he went from city to city, he preached the gospel continually, and was successful in making many converts as he proceeded on his way.

During the period of this journey, and probably not long after he left Rome, Paul took an opportunity of writing his famous Epistle to the Hebrews — that is, in other words, to the converted Jews dwelling in Jerusalem and Judæa, who were so called to distinguish them from the Hellenists. Much discussion has taken place among the older writers, as to whether St Paul was the author of this Epistle, and as to whether it was originally written in Hebrew or in Greek. With regard to the first of these points, the Apostle's authorship is now almost universally acknowledged ; and, with regard to the second,

it really seems to be scarcely worth discussing, whether it was originally written in Hebrew, and afterwards translated into Greek, or originally written in the latter language. It is not at all improbable that this may have been the case — for, although addressed to the Jews, who used the former language, it was undoubtedly intended to be useful to many more; and, besides, the Greek language at that period was not only spoken, but much admired throughout the whole of Palestine.

The great design of the Epistle is to guard the Jews against apostacy, on account of the many trials they were compelled to undergo, and the wretched and degenerate condition into which they had then fallen. In order to effect this, the Apostle shows that the great and principal doctrine of Christianity was just the completion of the Mosaic dispensation. He points out the dignity of the person and character of our Saviour, and proves his vast superiority over the angels, and over Moses, and of his priesthood over that of Aaron; he reverts to the history of their forefathers, and warns them to beware of the errors into which *they* had fallen; he shows, in bold relief, the wretched state of apostates, and affectionately expresses his wish and intention to lead them forward to the knowledge of the gospel — enlightens many parts of the doctrines of Christianity, by reference to their own

sacred writings and institutions — exhorts them to the constant exercise of all that was good and praiseworthy, and concludes with earnest prayers for their temporal and spiritual welfare.

After leaving Italy, the Apostle crossed the Mediterranean sea, and arrived in Spain. Although he preached in various places in that country, it does not appear that he spent any length of time in it, or proceeded towards its southern parts. On the contrary, soon after his arrival, he turned northward, and, pursuing his journey, passed through France, preaching on his way as opportunity offered, till he crossed the channel, and, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, arrived in England — a long and perilous journey from the bright and sunny regions of the east.

At the period of his arrival Britain was a Roman colony. London and Verulam were its principal cities — both of them wealthy, populous, and flourishing places. An immense number of Roman citizens resided in them, and the communication betwixt them and the capital of the world, now so sunk and degraded, was constant. Many Britons of high rank had been to Rome, and many Romans of distinction had visited the British shores. The progress of the Christian religion in foreign parts, therefore, was no secret to the inhabitants of England; and the Apostle's appearance was hailed with

joy by them. We need not tell that his preaching was successful, nor that the blessed light of the gospel almost immediately dispersed those dark and gloomy superstitions which had hung like a lowering cloud over Britain for many a long and dismal day. We need not tell that the bursting light which thus shone forth has never been extinguished, nor how gloriously it has lived in that land throughout those dark ages when its existence ceased for ever in many a fairer country; and, I am sure, we need not remind the reader, that Britain now ranks pre-eminent as a Christian nation, and that of all the churches planted by the indefatigable Apostle, Britain stands foremost in every deed of charity and of love.

After the lapse of nine months — passed in Spain, France, and Britain — Paul embarked on shipboard, and proceeded by sea to Crete, a voyage as long and as perilous as any he had ever undertaken. For some time he continued preaching in different parts of this island till intelligence reached him of the wretched state of Judæa, then suffering under all those numerous afflictions which led the Jews to raise the standard of revolt, and to engage in that war of extermination which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. Trembling for the safety of his beloved flock, and anxious to exhort them, in the midst of every suffering and privation, to remain

steadfast in their faith, he constituted Titus bishop of Crete, and then embarked once more to visit the land of his nativity.

Proceeding first to Antioch, he remained there for some time, after which he passed through the whole surrounding country, continuing instant in his preaching, and exhorting his disciples to allow no earthly trial to shake the firmness of their faith. He then travelled through Cilicia; from that, northward to Galatia — passed through the greater part of that extensive province, and afterwards proceeded to Colosse — preaching at all the various cities he visited in this extended route. From Colosse he proceeded to visit the church at Ephesus, from which he passed on to Troas, and afterwards to Philippi. There he remained for some time; after which he proceeded to Nicopolis, a considerable city on the Danube, from whence he wrote his Epistle to Titus, the main object of which is not only to instruct the person to whom it was addressed in the proper discharge of all the various duties in which he was engaged, but also to instruct the Cretans generally in those matters which belonged to their eternal welfare. It might perhaps, therefore, as well have been denominated an Epistle to the Cretans as to Titus; for it seems certain that it was intended for their inspection. The Apos-

tle accordingly instructs Titus sharply to rebuke the Cretans, describing their character in the words of their own poet Epimenides, who unquestionably uses no measured terms. He then points out the different duties to which their attention should be called — exhorts Titus not only to teach them these, but in his own person and conduct to set them an example of obedience, and finally requests Titus to come to him at Nicopolis.

Whether Titus complied with this invitation or not, seems to be a matter of considerable doubt. But the Apostle remained at Nicopolis till the winter had passed away, after which he resumed his labors, and passing through the greater part of Macedonia, proceeded southward to Corinth, where he made a short stay, and preached again to the disciples there. He then embarked at Cenchrea, and, crossing the Ægean Sea, landed once more at Troas, from which, after a short stay in that city, he proceeded to visit Timothy at Ephesus.

During this long journey the Apostle undoubtedly suffered many of those persecutions and afflictions which awaited him wherever he went, and which were so admirably calculated to prepare him for the now fast-approaching termination of his earthly career. It is supposed that at Ephesus he received a divine intimation that

his labors were nearly at an end, his sufferings drawing to a close, and that he must, ere long, gain the crown of martyrdom at Rome. His stay at Ephesus accordingly was short. He bade farewell to Timothy — his most dear and valued friend — and then, with characteristic firmness, set his face towards Rome ; and although now bending under the weight of years, journeyed with a light heart to meet his impending fate.

The manner in which this journey was accomplished is involved in obscurity. Some think that the Apostle passed through Macedonia, again visiting the churches he had planted there, and, crossing the Adriatic Gulf into Italy, proceeded by land to Rome. Others are of opinion that he embarked at Ephesus, and went by sea. This is more probable. But it is now a matter of little moment whether the one opinion or the other be correct. He arrived at Rome soon after the commencement of the first general persecution of the Christians in the reign of the Tyrant Nero. The emperor was at that time absent in Greece. In the person of his governor Hetius, however, he had left a fit counterpart to rule in his stead. The Apostle was pointed out to this instrument of tyranny and oppression as the principal leader of the obnoxious sect, and instant imprisonment was his lot. But,

although his person was in bonds, his mind was free, and he employed the period of his imprisonment in preaching to his fellow-prisoners, and, as occasion offered, to the soldiers of his guard. By this means many of these poor prisoners were converted, several of the soldiers of the guard, and even two of their centurions, *Procesus* and *Martinian*.

During the period of this confinement, the Apostle also wrote his second Epistle to Timothy. In point of composition it is perhaps the most sublime of all his epistles, and, being written shortly before his death, may, as *St Chrysostom* justly observes, be considered as his ‘last testament.’ It, therefore, carries an imposing weight along with it when it requests Timothy to come to him before winter, and yet, as if uncertain that he should live to see that day, at once conveys to him every instruction that a parent could have given to a favored child, both with regard to his own personal conduct, and to the guidance of those who were placed under his charge. In an especial manner he directs him to oppose with fervent power those false teachers in the church, of whom some are particularised by name — foretells, as if by the spirit of prophecy, grievous and insupportable times which should arise — complains, but not bitterly, that he had been forsaken by all his earth-

ly friends, and left to stand his last of worldly trials alone, but rejoices in the support he had received from Him who was able to bestow it, and, upon the verge of eternity, stretching forth his hands and arms, in the words of glorious exultation, exclaims, ‘I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.’

The crown he panted for, he soon obtained. The evil-minded hater of Christianity returned to Rome. Paul was taken from prison, and with but little form of trial, condemned to die ; the only privilege accorded to him being that, as a Roman citizen, he should suffer by the sword. In this last extremity his usefulness never ceased. While proceeding to the place of execution he addressed the soldiers who guarded him in the most animated terms ; and the closing labor of his long and useful life was rewarded by the knowledge that he had redeemed three other souls from the error of their ways. But earth was flitting from his sight — heaven was before his eyes. He was led, bound and in fetters, to the Salvian waters, about three miles from Rome, where, upon the 29th day of June, in the year of our Lord 66, and in the sixty-

eighth year of his own age, he bowed his head to the sword, and thus closed a long life of persecution and of trial.

His remains were interred in the Via Ostiensis, and over them, in after years, a splendid church was erected by Constantine the Great. In the reign of other emperors it was greatly beautified and added to, in memory of the glorious martyr ; but I believe the whole concentrated building has since been reduced to ashes, although another stately fabric is now rising in its place.

Thus perished one whose life, from its commencement to its close, was that of a strenuous and active man. His native talents and intellectual endowments were of a high order. His persecution of the Christians, previous to his conversion, was the effect of a mistaken zeal. Under the law, his life was considered *blameless* ; and, under the gospel, we have seen how it was passed. The trials, the sufferings, the persecutions he endured, would have driven many from the faith ; but, uncompromisingly firm in the cause of his Lord and Master, he submitted to every one of them without a murmur, and con-

tinued to move forward in the path of his duty, distributing blessings to the right hand and to the left, till the glorious sunshine of eternity burst upon his sight, dispersing, forever, the dark and gloomy clouds of time.

QUESTIONS.

How had St Paul been treated during his voyage by the centurion ?

What was St Paul's condition after his arrival at Rome ?

For what purpose did he call together the chief of the Jews ?

For how long a term of time did he preach in his own hired house ?

What is said of his trial before Nero ?

What epistles did St Paul write while a prisoner at Rome ?

What was the Apostle's object in writing the Epistle to the Philippians ?

What is said respecting the Epistle to Philemon ?

What is said respecting the Epistle to the Colossians ?

What is said of the Epistle to the Ephesians?

Where is it said that St Paul went to preach, when he was set at liberty?

When is it supposed that he wrote the epistle to the Hebrews?

What was his great design in writing this epistle?

To what country is it said that St Paul went on leaving Italy?

To what country did he next proceed?

How old was St Paul when he arrived in England?

How much time did he pass in Spain, France, and England?

To what place did he next sail?

What places did the Apostle next visit?

From what place did he write the Epistle to Titus?


What other places did he visit before he went to Rome and was imprisoned the second time?

What is said of his second Epistle to Timothy?

What is said respecting his death?

Where is it said that his remains were buried?





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